

September 2010

Greetings to you,

In addition to ministries to marriages and families, FamilyLife also cares deeply for orphans, foster kids, and the fatherless. It is from this passion that Hope for Orphans was founded and became a ministry of FamilyLife in 2003.

Orphan Sunday is a simulcast event held every year that is sponsored by the Christian Alliance of Orphans (a group of several orphan, adoption, and foster care ministries - Hope for Orphans is a part). From their website:

"On Orphan Sunday, Christians stand for the orphan . We are a people called to defend the fatherless...to care for the child that has no family...to visit orphans in their distress.

It's your opportunity to rouse church, community and friends to God's call to care for the orphan."

It's hard to tell how many kids (orphans, foster, or fatherless) have been impacted by this event or other events like this in the past, but let me tell you the difference it's made at our church.

On November 8th, 2009 our church participated in Orphan Sunday. Little did we know the impact that it would have on those who attended and in the lives of children we didn't yet know.

Soon after this event, a widow in our church began the process of becoming a foster parent. She hosted several kids in her home for various lengths of time. In April, three kids (a boy and his two younger sisters) were brought to her at 10pm in need of somewhere to stay. What began as a temporary 2-3 week stay, ended up becoming 4 months. They weren't all easy days either. I don't know all the details of their, but, needless to say, these kids needed someone to provide them a safe and loving environment despite their behavior issues.

Another family in our church, who also attended the Orphan Sunday event last year, felt God stirring them to make an impact in the lives of needy kids. They began talking about adoption. As if by "coincidence" (we know it was really



Anna
(10)



Danielle
(8)



Julia
(6)



Rachel
(3)



Sarah
(2)



Naomi
(2)

- **Anna:** is so excited to be turning 10 this month; not only is she getting older but also gets a bigger allowance;
- **Danielle:** got to can peaches with her Grandma Rebecca;
- **Julia:** has decided that she should have an art show on TV because she loves to draw so much;
- **Rachel:** has been eager to join in with our homeschool activities, even though she's only three;
- **Sarah & Naomi:** decide that sometimes they don't need to take their afternoon nap, which makes for a difficult afternoon but an easy bedtime if they don't crash at 4pm first.

Providence), the three kids being cared for by the widow were placed up for adoption by the State this past July. So this family began the process of adopting them. On August 9th, the kids moved in with their “forever family”.

Since then, two other families have also begun the process of taking the required classes to become foster parents with the possibility to adopt.

That widow, that I mentioned initially, is my mother. That other “family in our church” is my sister and brother-in-law. Partly because of the Hope for Orphans ministry Orphan Sunday event, and completely because of these families being open to what God was calling them to do, our lives have been changed forever. My sister and brother-in-law now have 7 kids instead of four, my mother has 3 new grandkids, and my daughters have 3 new cousins! And 3 kids that we didn’t know anything about last year now have a permanent place in our hearts.

Orphan Sunday will be happening again this year on November 7th. Will you consider being the catalyst for an event in your church or small group? Or maybe just invite another couple or two to join you. Becoming a foster family or adoptive parents aren’t the only ways to champion the cause of the fatherless. Find out how you can help by being a part of this event.

For details visit www.OrphanSunday.org or www.HopeForOrphans.com. Or call Hope for Orphans at 972-941-4431. You never know the life or lives that may be changed; it may be your own.

*“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: **to look after orphans and widows in their distress...**” - James 1:27*

Fighting for families,



Abraham & Deborah Lara