

To our Good Samaritan Family near and far,

*¡Feliz Navidad!* Merry Christmas! Prayers that the holiday season finds you well.

On behalf of the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, know that you fill our hearts with gratitude. You have been the utmost of blessings this entire year.

2017 was often filled with challenges. We found solace in your compassion, and we were witnesses to the answered prayers of your heart. It is an honor to call you friends, it is an honor to call you family. It has been a year in which the financial and political landscape often made the call to compassion uncomfortable, even impertinent. It was in these moments that I most saw the shining exemplification of your grace. In vast display, your love for your brother, your fellow man, *the least of these*, was greater than any political divide. Humbly, I thank you.

We are surrounded with reminders this time of year, *that unto us a child is born*. Isaiah 9:6 both announces and declares that His name is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. This is the God we serve. This is the God we are privileged to bring to the nations. We are in a unique position that the nations come to us. The continued excellence in relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), allowed us to welcome and aid refugees spanning the globe from Latin America, to various countries in Africa. You also enabled us to feed, clothe, and care for our multiple ministries on both sides of the border, including our orphanage, and the local poorest communities. It was made entirely possible by your support. You may not have been aware of it, but your prayers, the physical labor and endeavor of every congregation and its members, everyone who has worked so steadfastly to support us—were what we carried with us. It is always our prayer that we reflect Christ in everything we do. In so doing, it is also our prayer that we reflect you, and be the grace to the refugees and immigrants we welcome, that you are to us.

As we enter 2018, we do so in a Hebrews state of mind. Chapter 4, v. 16 reminds us that we are to *go boldly before the throne*. We plan to do exactly that. We face financial uncertainty and trepidation. There is an augmentation of vulnerability in already vulnerable communities. The need is great, the resources are scarce. We pray that you will consider continuing your support.

In closing, I reiterate my immense gratitude. I pause, and am humbled every time I think of all the times you have written upon your heart the concerns that were in mine. Like the many colors of the rainbow, and like the many promises it holds, you, beloved members of our Good Samaritan family, are that arc. You are the hands, you are the feet, and you are the heartbeat of that ever-shadowing arc of compassion. I thank you.

May the God of all grace see us through the end of this year, and into the next. Happy New Year!

You brother in Christ,

The Rev. F. Feliberto Pereira  
Founder and Executive Director  
Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries