



June 2, 2021 Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana.

Oscar is a very small 14-year-old who was a premature baby, and who got dropped accidentally by his father. He suffered brain damage and today is not able to talk or walk and has cognitive difficulties.



Karla, his mother, is a saint in caring for him, often carrying him like a small child on her hip. The family moved to Tijuana five months ago, escaping organized crime violence that culminated in the killing of Karla's father. Hearing that the Oblates help people

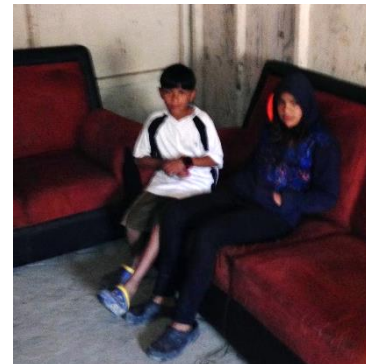


in her community, she reached out to the local social minister.

When we first visited their house, they had two nice horses with foals and several other animals. It turned out the father's boss allowed them to stay in the house if they would care for a number of his animals. We have been helping with food baskets and transported Oscar to the clinic for lab work, when it appeared he was declining. Oscar got better quickly. A local family donated well-kept couch and love seat, so we gave it to the Oscar's family so they don't have to all sit on the bed to watch TV. We also brought a child size wheelchair for Oscar. The family has started attending the local chapel on Sundays.



Two weeks ago, we got a call about Oscar's father. He had an accident at work and suffered serious cuts on both legs. He had 27 stitches. Recently, we brought one of our medical students to remove his stitches. He hopes to return to work in two weeks.



Karla has been fretting over the unfairness of life - to be working so hard to make ends meet and now her husband cannot work. Worrying how they were going to eat, she complained to God. But now she says she looks at it as an opportunity for the family to closer, and especially for her husband to spend more time with Oscar. Oscar seems to love the additional attention of having his father home the whole day.

Carmelo is a middle-aged man who was born with a disability that has never enabled him to walk. The condition was never diagnosed. About two months ago when we were



delivering food baskets in his area, we noticed him sitting in the dirt just outside a very modest dwelling. It was obvious from the contortions of his legs that he could not walk. We offered him a food basket. He declined saying that once before some news agency with cameras and microphones asked to interview him. He consented but the interview made him cry. He never saw them again. So, he decided not to trust people who offer to help. However, he accepted the food basket, but we were to not take pictures. On our next visit, again he was sitting in the dirt, we brought another food basket and he smiled and asked if we wanted to take a picture. With great respect we took his picture.

On our next visit, we asked if he wanted a wheelchair and he declined. But on our fourth visit he said a wheelchair would be good because he would not wear out his pants from scooting on the ground. We brought him a wheelchair and he accepted it explaining that he had never had one. He then also consented to let our medical students examine his legs and do a little physical therapy.



Juan Aaron Alejandro López is a 19-year-old psychology student. He first got a scholarship to finish high school and now Bill De Rubertis sponsors him in his university. He, like others, has been influenced by older members of the youth ministry that have become roll models. In his case his older brother became a psychologist and went on to work for the Oblates. He says that learning online is not only challenging but not as good as being with other students in the classroom. He would like to help people overcome the stereotypical thinking that psychology is only for people that have mental problems saying that it is for regular people to have good mental health.