

# Gulick Gazette

## EL MOGOTE

Marina, the housekeeper in the home where we're living, invited us to her family's house. We were looking forward to the adventure, but didn't know what to expect. They live in a *pueblito* (little tiny town) named El Mogote, which means "the woodpile."



*Marina holding her nephew in front of the family shrine to the Virgin of Guadalupe.*

According to our team director, this invitation was quite an honor. But he advised us not to get our hopes up, "It's nice for someone to invite you to their home for a weekend . . . kind of a compliment, like saying 'you're a friendly couple. It would be fun to get together sometime.' But if Marina actually intends to take you home with her she'll ask you a second time. Until then I wouldn't bring the subject up. Wait for her to initiate the next move." So we were delighted and flattered when the following

Thursday she said (in Spanish), "I've talked with my mother and she is expecting you to visit in a fortnight." Her family had never had foreigners in their home before. As the date approached we sensed a kind of apprehension rising in Marina. Two days before our little adventure she revealed to us some of the reasons for her nervousness . . . (to be continued next month)

## ECONOMICS 101

"How are you doing?" I asked. "Mas o menos (so-so)" Rene, our host, sighed. It was the first time he hadn't responded in his usual, cheerful manner. When I asked him why, he began to openly discuss with me Mexico's present economic crisis and how profoundly it was affecting his life. "I've never felt so down in my life," he said. "Two years ago I had 43 employees and a healthy business. Now I have eight employees. And it's not just me . . . everybody is hurting." His vulnerability was a sign of acceptance of me. The slow process of our becoming grafted into a culture is beginning. He went on to express what I've been reading in the news: Mexico is in the middle of the worst recession since the '20s, possibly the worst of the century. This one is particularly potent because during the presidency of ex-president Carlos Salinas the country had begun to allow itself to hope in a prosperous future. Salinas seemed to do everything right. He privatized many state-owned businesses, placed resources and power into the hands of individual communities, and moved Mexico into a position that everyone here hoped would usher in a new era of



*Annette with Marina's mother under their bougainvillea.*

prosperity and respect. But these hopes were smashed. On December 24, 1994, the *peso* and stock market began their descent. In despair businessmen jumped from their office buildings to their death. Now the poor are poorer, and people are afraid to hope. Fathers often go to the US where they can make more in one hour at minimum wage than they can here in a day. It's an interesting time to be here as a Christian. Many people are looking for answers and hope. The evangelical church offers time-tested, divinely inspired answers . . . that work. Annette and I are discovering that we not only need to "rejoice with those who rejoice" (my strong point), but it means we must "cry with those who cry" too.

Thanks for caring and praying,

*Tim & Annette*

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P.S. Feel free to contact us at the Toluca address below.