

AICES

Aid for Children of El Salvador

Sara is aged 9 and in 3rd grade at school.

I am called Sara, I have two brothers and one sister – one brother is 16, another 11 and my little sister is five. We live with my mother, but we are very poor, at times there is nothing to eat except tortilla (maize bread) but since my sister Rosa and I came to the Foundation things are better. Here they worry about us, care for us and help us. If we are ill they take us to the clinic and so I like coming here. I have been coming here three years, have lots of friends and I go to school every day. My father is in prison and I love him a lot and need him. My mother works sometimes and sometimes not, my oldest brother is on the streets and because of him we have lots of problems. So I much prefer to be in the Foundation than my house, if I can get to ninth grade in school I will be able to leave home.

Patricia is aged 9 and in 3rd grade at school.

There are about 8 of us in my house, my mother, three brothers, 2 women and a child of 6, and my nephews who are 3. My mother is an angry person; she is always scolding me and hits me. I am very happy to be in the Foundation because they care for me and love me. My mother takes me there because my two sisters were raped when they were 13 and 14 years old and my mother does not want that to happen to me. She goes to work and leaves us alone, now my sisters sometimes work for their sons but the money isn't enough because we are very poor and everything is so expensive. Here in the Foundation I feel well and like all the teachers, I go to school and enjoy it. In comparison in the house it is boring and we are frightened of the 'Maras' (gangs) who are dangerous and lots of bad men are by the house.

Karen is aged 5 and has not yet started school.

Karen is the only daughter of Monica, a young lady of 23, who was looked after in the Foundation AMOR, was a resident at Casa Amando refuge and continues to visit and seek help from us. Her situation of extreme poverty and the health problems of Karen have driven Monica to desperation with not knowing how to help her daughter. Karen is a girl who was born with serious health problems, Monica can't explain the exact illness the child suffers from but what is certain is that she has frequent convulsions and her immune system is poor. The child lives the life of an invalid; she and her classmate are constantly going to hospital. Monica is also epileptic so can't get a regular job. In the Foundation we help her as much as we can, sometimes with medicine for the child or with some food and for that Monica cleans the offices once a week.

The unhappy situation in families brings a feeling of impotence for each case which is presented and we would like to have the solution for them all. But it is impossible. Only with the help of God and the generous people who believe in this project give us hope and the spirit to continue. Each family has a history of greater or of lesser difficulties; the important thing is to believe that they have 'a better tomorrow'.