



FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

CHRISTMAS 2021 NEWSLETTER

We continue to be thankful that we are keeping our children and staff free from major problems with Covid 19, though it is not clear currently what will be the impact of the Omicron virus in Bolivia.

My “few months in Colombia”, that I referred to in the last Christmas newsletter, has turned into more than a year working with the UN amongst former FARC combatants; but I’m now home for Christmas.

Our priorities in Alalay this year have continued to be to keep everyone safe during the pandemic and investing in the education and training of the children, in addition to creating the children’s playground and once more producing many thousands of panettone for sale this Christmas, to raise funds for future projects. I hope to include some panettone photos in the Spring newsletter.

Next year we need to rebuild our very depleted finances and will concentrate mainly on the vocational training of our young students and finding them worthwhile jobs. However, repeating the statement in my last newsletter: we remain very positive about the future of our children at Alalay, and look forward to giving you even more encouraging news in 2022.

Since people in the UK often think that street children must be orphans, I’ve decided now to tell you a little about the backgrounds of two of the children who live as part of the Alalay family:

Firstly, Mia is six years old and comes from a broken and extremely poor family. She lived with her mother, younger sister and stepfather (her father had abandoned the family) and she begged for food from neighbours. Mia came to Alalay in July 2021 and now lives within a new family unit, has several friends of her own age and attends a local primary school. At school she gets on well with her teacher and classmates, is proving very responsible and says that she likes school a lot - especially reading.



She is described as an affectionate, charismatic child, who likes to play with her dolls and share with her friends.



Secondly, Gabriel is ten years old and comes from a violent and divided family, with alcoholic parents. He and his sister had to live on the streets and beg for food in order to survive. Gabriel came to Alalay in January 2020 and appears very happy, because he now lives in a loving family. He attends the local primary school in the mornings, is keen to learn and enjoys mathematics! In the afternoons he attends Alalay’s Social-Sporting School (a programme funded by the Real Madrid Foundation, in which Alalay kids and at-risk children come together through football to learn “life skills” and values, such as respect, self-esteem, communication, rights and duties, gender equality and conflict resolution).

He is described as a loving, calm and cooperative child.

I remain very grateful to our many supporters, both those that we know and those who give anonymously – without your help and encouragement I couldn’t continue this vital work.

Annie Syrett, Bristol, England - December 2021

www.alalay.co.uk



The excitement before Christmas!
Happy children with hope



**We wish you all a very Happy Christmas
and a Peaceful New Year**

With lots of love from all the Alalay family x