



Students at the House of Rescue

# *Blossoms of the Soul*

The metropolis of León, Guanajuato, is an authentic “Old Mexico town” of two million people located roughly in the center of the country. Immersed in cultural identity and historical roots, León celebrates the past and present through its picturesque architecture, historical landmarks, museums, art, parks and plazas, and even a local zoo. Youth and vitality exude from its neighborhoods. León is the leather shoe capital of Latin America and produces seventy percent of all Mexican-made shoes. In sports, major league teams and the second largest hot air balloon festival in the world compete for fans.

But...beyond the colorful shops and vibrant activities lies a León seldom seen—a dark side—an underbelly replete with addiction, suffering, pain, and death. Few visit these sordid places; even fewer care at all.

Deep within the city is a special “garden” not noted in any tourist brochure—not a stunning botanical garden with statues and

fountains entwined by walking trails, but a carefully tended patch of shoots—thirteen to be exact.

*What are these shoots? Where do they come from, and why are they planted here with such special care?*

Pastor Francisco, the gardener, knows. He remembers every lonely corner, every isolated alley, every derelict building, every barren place, every struggling shoot. They were trampled, broken, and hopeless. He brought them one by one to his House of Rescue and nurtured them with love and prayer. He talked to them. He told them that they were special—created by a loving God. He told them that their Creator would give them strength to grow and blossom and bring forth fruit. When that happened, he counseled them

to give back praise and show gratitude for the One Who had given them the gift of life.

Amazingly, the shoots did grow, and as their height stretched toward the Son, their shallow roots widened and deepened. Tiny, tentative buds emerged. Then one miraculous day, the living, breathing creations exploded into



Francisco Jimenez

exuberant blooms!!

Such joy! Such rejoicing! Such gratefulness! Such humble praise!

These “Blossoms of the Soul” showed deep gratitude to their Creator. They wanted to go back to the alleys and dens and derelict places to find more shoots—to bring them to the House of Rescue. They hungered and thirsted to share the “nutrients” that gave them life. They longed to produce fruit!

## EDITOR’S NOTE

The House of Rescue directed by Pastor Francisco Jimenez of Iglesia Bautista Monte Horeb in León, Mexico, is a restoration group home for drug addicts. On a recent ministry trip to Mexico, CRI’s Spanish network director Fabio Betancourth met the “flowers” in this special “garden.” All residents of the home attend a Bible institute which meets Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

“I have never met such humble, grateful, kind people,” Betancourth said. “They are so eager to hear the Word. Their joy is abundant, and their gratitude is unparalleled! They are truly “blossoms of the soul.”



## IRAQ Baghdad - 2025 Year End Report Radio Director Maher Daoud

Twenty years of ministry continues to produce fruit.

1. December: We began our eighth radio station in Nasiriyah (Ancient Ur of Chaldea). Immediately, we received a phone call—a couple asking for prayer.
2. In 2025 we averaged 159,000 listeners on Facebook.
3. We developed eight new daily programs.
4. During the month of December, 55 people called the station, and 238 sent us letters.
5. In the New Testament Baptist Church in Baghdad, 40 people were saved, 12 were baptized, and 13 were disciplined.
6. 8,000 tracts were distributed in Baghdad; 854 Bibles were given away.
7. Ten families were provided with food packages and medical aid.
8. Our first Bible Conference in Erbil brought a record attendance of 100.
9. The dedication of the New Testament Baptist Church of Erbil garnered 160 attendees, including other pastors and government officials.



Pastor Noe Martinez

## CENTRAL MEXICO Training Schools for Pastors and Missionaries

Fabio Betancourth, Director of CRI’s Spanish network *La Luz Latina*, held two training camps in León, Mexico, in January of 2026. Partnering with Pastor Noe Martinez (who was saved from a life of drug addiction), Betancourth and Martinez spent three days counseling sixty pastors and their wives on how to improve their leadership of their local churches. Following the pastors’ training, Betancourth spent two days teaching twelve seasoned Christian workers who have surrendered to the mission field. As a side note, Pastor Martinez is seeking government approval for a Christian radio station in his area. Please pray for a license to be granted for León, Mexico.

## EDITOR’S NOTE

In previous articles we have listed Kirkuk as Saddam Hussein’s hometown. The correct city is Tikrit.

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