

Dear Family and Friends,

Please allow us a few moments to update you on Byron's and Snezana's efforts to adopt. We are excited about what has occurred since the last time we wrote and want to share the good news with you!

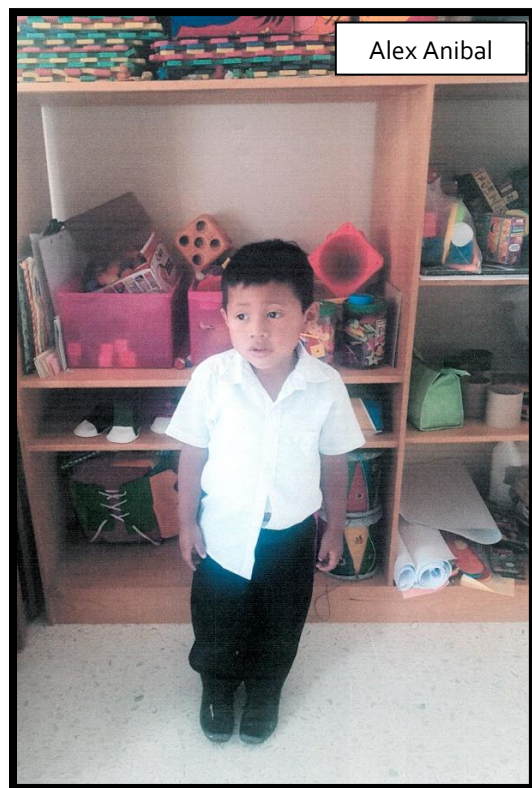
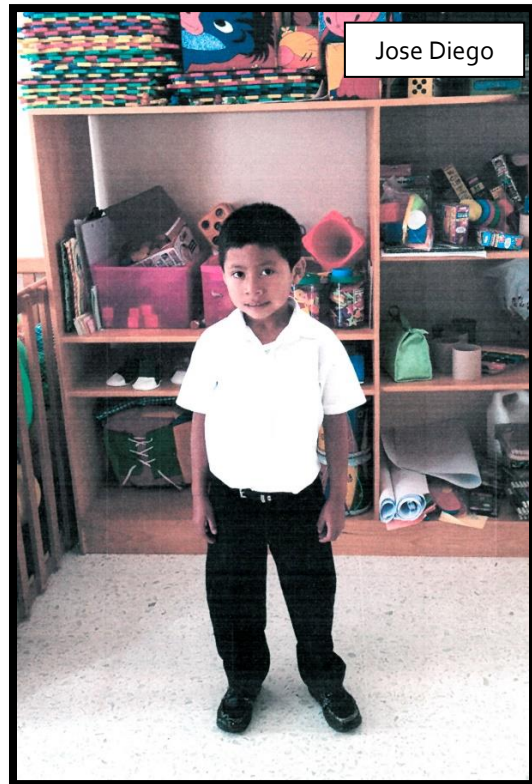
Adoption Process

In case you do not remember or are unaware of the adoption process that Byron and Snezana started in April, we will review it briefly. Byron and Snezana began to work on Snezana's residence in 2014, shortly after they were married. This whole process finally came to an end in January of this year! Once Snezana was a resident with her DPI (identification) card, they were able to submit the paperwork for adoption. Allow us to summarize the chronology of events.

On March 1, they attended their first adoption workshop, where they became informed about the adoption process here in Guatemala. After getting the adoption paperwork together as instructed in this workshop, they submitted it on Friday, April 20. On June 21, the social worker and psychologist visited them to evaluate their home. On July 4, they went for their psychological evaluation—and passed! This was the longest of the appointments and the most emotionally taxing, but thankfully they were considered as good candidates for parenthood. On August 16, they went to another meeting, a formative workshop for those who were at the second to the last stage in adoption. And, on September 7, they once again visited the adoption agency to speak with the social worker and another psychologist who would present two profiles of children they could choose to adopt.

Two Precious Boys

These profiles were of two brothers from the department of Quiche, Guatemala. The older brother is **Jose Diego** and the younger is **Alex Anibal**. They were four and two when they were taken from the home of their relatives and placed in a children's home for their protection and nurture. Now they are six and four years old. Byron and Snezana heard their story and the information that the psychologist shared with them. They were given ten days to decide but requested some private time to talk and to consider the decision to adopt these two boys. They prayed and cried together as they made the decision that they would accept these boys to be their children. When the psychologist and the social worker returned to the room and heard the good news, they shared the photos of the boys. Then, they all signed the paperwork stating that Byron and Snezana want to adopt Jose Diego and Alex Anibal!



Byron and Snezana are scheduled to go to Quiche on October 8 to meet the boys and to spend five days with them. If all goes well, they will bring their sons home on the fifth day, on Friday, October 12.



After signing the paperwork, with social worker and psychologist.



With Hi, receiving house warming gifts and celebrating the adoption.



As you can see, they are very happy parents to be! This process has taught us another valuable lesson about trusting in God's timing and not our own. It took us over 3 ½ years to get Snezana's paperwork, which frustrated and discouraged us many times. Yet, the actual adoption process took only about seven months! Wow! We thank and praise God!

Living in a New House and Changes in Travel Plans

Byron and Snezana moved to a new house at the end of August. Since the end of August, Byron and Snezana and have been working diligently, with lots of help from Hawatthia, to get the house ready for the arrival of Jose Diego and Alex Anibal. As you can see in the picture above (bottom left), where Hawatthia is holding the basket with many cards in it, they received many gifts from many good brethren and churches who participated in a house warming that Hawatthia coordinated. They are so grateful to them and to Hawatthia for this kind gesture of love and generosity!

Once the boys are with Byron and Snezana, the new family will need time to develop relationships and to bond. As a result, Byron and Snezana will not be traveling in the coming months as they normally do at the end of the year. Also, it takes on average about nine months to get all the paperwork in order so that the boys will get the Benitez last name and their documentation. It is not until after that time that they will be able to apply for passports and visas to travel to the States. Byron and Snezana are

very grateful to Hawatthia for all the support he has been providing at this time and to the churches for their understanding and flexibility regarding the end-of-the-year travels.

We thank God for His provision and for the abundance of blessings all along this process of adoption. We thank all of you for all your prayers, care, support, and encouragement. Please continue to pray for the adoption process to continue to go well, for everyone as we get adjusted and develop our relationship, and for Byron, Snezana and Hi as they nurture and guide the children in the way of the Lord. Please pray for Jose Diego and Alex Anibal to heal from their wounds from the past and to develop healthy and spiritually strong.

Note: Please do not post this information on any social media outlets or websites until after the adoption process is completed for confidentiality reasons.

Serving Jesus,

*Hawatthia
Byron and Snezana*