



## *Yarling Antonio Blandon Feed My Starving Children Recipient*

Yarling Antonio Blandon is a four-year-old child who lives with his 36-year-old mother, Gloria Maria Blandon, and his 45-year-old father, Roberto Blandon, in the isolated community of Los Chaguites in the rural dry zone of the municipality of Jinotega, Nicaragua.

In this area it is too dry to raise anything besides a special variety of corn—and barely any of that as it hadn't rained for three months. There are a few cattle, for those that can afford them, and a pig or two. When we were in Jinotega, we asked a man where his pig was and he said it had died. Probably from malnutrition, we thought. The only other way to make a living is by making charcoal and hauling firewood to the city. When asked how much they could earn selling a "horse full" of wood they said \$4.00—and that involved walking eight kilometers each way and burning out the horse!

Yarling Antonio is the youngest of five children (three boys and two girls). They live in a very primitive house, built with adobe (mud and wood), with a dirt floor. They have to carry dirty unpotable water, the only water available, for at least a half a mile. The whole family shares the same bedroom and the three young boys share the same bed, made of wooden branches without mattresses.

Malnutrition is very common in children Yarling Antonio's age. At the age of 2 ½ he didn't like to eat much of anything. He was so thin and fragile. He began eating the FMSC Manapack portion of rice and soy about 18 months ago. His color is much better and now he is more active and motivated. He rarely gets sick. He has a better appetite and also eats the local food. He loves the rice with soybean provided by the program and always asks for more. His mother said, very emotionally, "He has changed a lot."

*St. Edward' sister parish relationship with Our Lady of the Angels in Nicaragua is a vibrant, active and inter-active relationship, where we at St. Edward's support, affirm and encourage the good work that is being done in our Sister Church and it's community. We invite you to consider traveling with us to Jinotega, to meet these wonderful people, to represent St. Edward's to Our Lady of the Angels, giving them faces to associate with St. Ed's, allowing them to retain their dignity, thank us in their own way, and show us what they have to offer to us as part of this reciprocal relationship.*