

# Famine a chance to help other children

**By Caralise Moore**

An Orewa resident has a timely reminder for Rodney residents to get behind the [World Vision 40-Hour Famine](#) this month.

Joy Owen has just returned from Nicaragua, visiting her five-year-old sponsored child Yeferson.

Daughter Rose, a former Orewa College student, had been working a ski season in Canada, and Mrs Owen wanted to visit both Rose and Yeferson.

"There is nothing like being there yourself."

After coordinating with [World Vision](#), on March 25 Joy and Rose arrived in Managua, Nicaragua's capital, and were met by [World Vision](#) representative Hanoi.

They travelled to the city of Leon and met

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Yeferson, his mother and grandmother.

"It was an emotional moment for us all," Mrs Owen says.

"Yeferson was pretty shy, but with prompting came over and gave me a hug.

"He looked so grown up in his school uniform and shiny black shoes."

They visited Yeferson's school and were welcomed at an assembly.

"We were treated almost like royalty by Yeferson's community, when really mum doesn't do that much – just gives them \$40 a month. It has made me want to sponsor a child," says Rose.

Mrs Owen was then presented with an oil painting done by one of the schoolchildren, as well as a collage by Yeferson.

"We were treated to the children singing the national anthem, all with clenched fists to their hearts, and a couple of the fathers sang a local song of the area," says Mrs Owen.

"The classrooms may not have been newly painted or as resourced as what we are used to, but the children looked interested, neat and tidy and well-nourished."

Mrs Owen watched some of the village women putting soil into polythene bags ready for tree seedlings.

"Their aim was to give two trees for each child to plant and others in the surrounding area to reforest areas. They still use wood and gas for cooking, so they plan to plant three trees for every tree cut down," Mrs Owen says.

"In the high-tech

world we live in, we forget simple pleasures.

"It was a magical moment seeing the joy on Yeferson's face when we rode in a 4WD truck.

"For him it was the very first time he had been in one.

"It truly was a day none of us will forget."

The 20-hour and [40-hour famine](#) runs from May 22 to 24.

People will be door-knocking and asking for sponsorship to support them doing the famine.

Through the 40-Hour Famine, [World Vision](#) aims to inspire and educate young New Zealanders, while raising funds for children overseas.

More than 120,000 young people do the famine every year.



**World Vision community:** Joy with daughter Rose, centre, meets sponsored child Yeferson, front, and World Vision helpers in Leon, Nicaragua.



**School ceremony:** Yeferson's school welcomes sponsors Joy Owen and Rose Rees-Owen.  
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