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## Pearls with a Special Purpose

In her search to find a pearl source for her business, My Princess Pearls, in Lehi, Utah, Wendy Bird came across a woman named Amara living in the Philippines. She was impressed by Amara's beautiful work and affordable pricing and knew she would be a great resource for her company. Wendy wrote an email to Amara expressing her interest and also told her that she had been praying to find a source with just Amara's pricing and qualifications.

Amara, putting two and two together, (that Wendy is from Utah, and also that she mentioned prayer) asked Wendy if she was LDS, and told her that she was a member and provided employment for many Relief Society sisters in her area.

After several subsequent emails, Amara also told Wendy about some of the dire circumstances of her employees. One worker has a child with Down's Syndrome, another has a blind daughter, another was left by her husband, and yet another has a paralyzed husband. All of these sisters find joy and strength in the gospel, but they, like so many others in the area, desperately lack adequate food, clothing, educational, and religious supplies

Wendy and her company made a commitment to help out by sending humanitarian boxes to the impoverished village. She began by asking for donations on a neighborhood level, which branched to a ward level, and then company level. To date, they have sent over 29 boxes weighing in excess of 100 pounds each. These boxes have contained clothing, shoes, food, scriptures, Young Women's and scouting materials, toys, educational materials, and more. To help out with the expensive shipping costs and to generate more donations, Wendy has also started a program in which all customers who donate any humanitarian item will receive ten percent off their

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pearl order.

Wendy explained, “These children become overjoyed when a package arrives, hoping that there might be a stuffed animal, a notebook, or even a used coloring book that they can claim. Christmas toys are unheard of. Food is more important. People work to eat, not to go to movies or decorate their homes.”

Wendy has received many emails expressing shock, joy, and relief at all that has been done. One such email read, “We had a fun afternoon, with the two very large boxes. I just watched them get all the items they need, including the books, pencils and pens, shoes, all sort of clothes, and TOYS! Would you believe? They all jumped with joy and brought their large bags home. You’ve made us all happy with those two boxes and more are coming, oh boy! It’s Christmastime once more! Thank you so much!”

“These people are amazing!” expressed Wendy. “Their circumstances are unfortunate, yet they are a blessed people because their faith is strong. Every time we think that maybe we should just walk away from this project, more requests are sent, miracles transpire, and we recommit to helping change lives.”

For more information or to see which items are being received for donations, call (801) 635-6591.

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