



global **solidarity** partnership

Summer 2006

MEMBERS of the Diocese of Wilmington Global Solidarity Partnership gathered together for a day of retreat on Saturday, June 2 at St. Joseph's on the Brandywine Parish in Greenville. The day included reflection, sharing ideas and building awareness. There was much warm-heartedness and good humor to go around.

A wonderful new movie "Estamos Aqui" was enjoyed by all. This video portrays both the hardships and the joys of the Guatemalan community living in Georgetown, Delaware and the Guatemalan community living in San Marcos today. While the film documents the reality of crossing two borders and trying to make it in the United States, there is a spirit of hope that pervades throughout the film. The video was produced by Serviam Ministries of Philadelphia and runs 90 minutes but there will be an edited version of 1 hour available soon.



Some happy attendees of the June 2nd retreat

The afternoon was taken up by brainstorming ideas for the future of the partnership. Mary Jo Froehlich reported on the delegation going to Guatemala this August. Others reported on fundraising activities done by their parishes or schools

The day concluded with prayer and some wonderful guitar playing by Fr. Chris. There was consensus to meet on a more regular basis and the next meeting was set for June 30. The Guatemalan partnership is certainly thriving and we thank all who attended for their ideas, but most of all for their collaborative spirit. Gracias!

-Meg Kane-Smith

SOLIDARITY Messengers, the new, grassroots action group of the Partnership, held its first meeting on June 30, 2007. About 25 people attended, both Guatemalan and non-Hispanic, male and female. The meeting included introductions, bilingual prayer and discussion of the August delegation to San Marcos and recommendations made at the June 2nd retreat. Some of the efforts being planned include meetings at several parishes and schools in the Fall, e-mail Solidarity updates, letters to the editor to local newspaper about Partnership efforts, a special local recognition of Guatemalan Independence Day (September 15) and the promotion of the "Coins for Coffee" initiative. The next meeting of Solidarity Messengers will be held on August 25, 2007 in Georgetown. Watch your e-mail for details.

PARISHES, schools, organizations and individuals have been very active in the Diocese of Wilmington's Global Solidarity Partnership with the Diocese of San Marcos in recent months. Parishioners of St. Dennis in Galena, Maryland and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Bear, Delaware joined with students from Ursuline Academy in Wilmington to collect children's vitamins, gauze and other medical supplies for the Maryknoll Sister's medical work in San Marcos and school supplies for the Colegio Catolico los Santos Reyes in El Tumbador.



St Ann's 5th graders fiesta for solidarity

On April 28, the feast of St. Mark, the fifth grade class of St. Ann School held a fiesta to raise funds for Finca Valdemar in San Marcos. The students were involved in all aspects of the fiesta. They donated items needed for the day or solicited the community for their help with this event. Also, prior to the fiesta, the children embroidered napkins, sewed skirts, made bracelets, necklaces and note cards to sell during the day. Family members assisted the students in decorating the hall festively with banners and signs in Spanish and English as well as running the games and raffles and selling food or crafts. The school community, well aware of our Solidarity partnership with Guatemala, generously supported the fiesta. This fiesta was the culmination of the children's year long study of Guatemala and raised \$4,251.00.

Holy Family parishioners filled Wawa coffee cups with coins, dollar bills, and checks as their 2007 Lenten Outreach. The \$3220 collected will be given to the families in Finca Valdemar. These families, fighting for land for the past five years, were granted a small coffee plantation to be owned communally. The money raised will help in their coffee production and provide them with a living wage.

A LETTER from Sister Mary Lou Daoust, a physician, Maryknoll Sister and member of the San Marcos Solidarity committee ~



Greetings from Guatemala! Hope all is well with you. I just wanted to send you a couple of photos and the details of how we used the two checks from Wilmington that were designated for health. I had hoped to do all of it together but can't seem to get anything from the other groups that received funds and I don't want to delay any longer waiting for them to respond.

We received two checks, one in February for Q11,818 and another in March for Q9,576 for a total of Q21,394. We used these funds to buy a new wheelchair for a 55 year old man from a Catarina aldea who had a stroke about 10 months ago and has a resultant hemiparalysis on one side of his body. He is unable to walk and the son carried him into the clinic when they came. He is unable to work so buying a wheelchair

This man now has a wheelchair thanks to the GSP was not a possibility for the family. Anyway we did buy one and the photo that is attached shows him along with his wife and son the day they came to pick it up. It makes life a lot easier for him and for the family. The cost of the wheelchair was Q1950 which is about \$250.

The rest of the funds went to buy medicines for our patients with tuberculosis. Today they have to receive treatment with four drugs in order to be cured and not have recurrent tuberculosis. We purchased two of the four drugs with the funds we received. One was Rifampicina and the other Isoniacid. We bought 10,000 Rifampicina capsules which is enough to treat 18 patients and 20,000 Isoniacid tablets which is enough to treat 22 patients. The cost of the two drugs was Q20,833.63. The second photo that is attached shows a young mother with an infant. The mother presented first with tuberculosis and after a few months brought

the infant. The mother had a fairly advanced case of pulmonary tb so we began treatment. She brought the infant in with fever and cough that did not clear with antibiotics and when we sent him for x-ray found that he had tb involving both lungs at the age of 7 months. Both are doing well on treatment. The mother has gained twenty pounds in 6 months and the baby who is now about to celebrate his first birthday now weighs 13 pounds. The mother was abandoned by the father of her 3 children so she really has trouble earning enough to live on. She is amazing though in the way that she carries out whatever she is instructed to do as far as giving the medicines to the baby. She appears faithfully every month on the day that she is supposed to come for follow-up. Jose and his mother are just two examples of the people that are under treatment for tuberculosis thanks to the funds that we have received from Wilmington. They are most grateful for the help that they have received and hopefully we will have normal lives after they finish their treatment. They are just two examples of some of the folks that we have been able to help thanks to your help.



Mother & child helped by GSP

Many thanks.
Love,
Mary Lou

PROJECTS of the Diocese of Wilmington/Diocese of San Marcos Global Solidarity Partnership are designed to help meet the needs of our sister diocese, bring our two dioceses closer together in solidarity and help all of us understand that we are all God's children with our own gifts to share.

If you and your parish are interested in learning more about any of these opportunities, contact the members of the Diocesan Solidarity Committee. The committee has suggested ways that parishes and schools can begin to build a relationship with the people of San Marcos. To get more information about these suggested projects, please phone Andy Zampini at 302-655-9624, Ext 210 or by e-mail at azampini@ccwilm.org. Project descriptions are also available on the Diocese of Wilmington's web site at <http://www.cdow.org/solidarity.html>. Please consider joining the partnership.