



*In this issue: Some reflections from summer delegations to San Marcos, recent works of solidarity, and info on upcoming Delight Night. More reflections from the summer delegations will follow in the next issue.*

### **Delight Night Wine and Food Pairing**

On Saturday, October 15, our diocese will celebrate another year of solidarity with our friends in San Marcos, Guatemala, with a wine tasting and food pairing at Holy Family Hall in Newark starting at 6:30PM. We expect a “sold out” crowd. Save the date – more info later on ticket pricing and orders.

Over the past thirteen years, through the efforts of the many volunteers in our parishes and Catholic schools, medical supplies, educational scholarships for children on the coffee plantations, emergency food supplies, catechist formation scholarships, building improvements for a school, library and a formation center, and earthquake relief have helped the lives of some of the poorest people in the world.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor for this event, or purchasing an ad for the program, please contact Mary Jo Frohlich at [maryjofrohlich@gmail.com](mailto:maryjofrohlich@gmail.com).

### **Delegation Report from Bill Mitchell, Wilmington Solidarity Committee member and member of St. Margaret of Scotland Parish, Wilmington**

This was my second trip to Guatemala; my first was in February 2013, just a few months after the earthquake that caused a lot of destruction. One of the most devastated areas was in El Quetzal where Padre Regino has his church. The church sustained heavy damage and the sight was disheartening. With the help of the Diocesan Partnership we were able to not only help Padre Regino to rebuild his home parish church but also provide a monthly stipend to allow him to provide food and other necessities to the people in the 12 churches he serves. His parish church, where he also lives, will be rededicated on Sunday, November 13. This, I think, shows the great power of the relationship we have built with this priest and the people of his parish. With the combined help of the people of both the San Marcos and the Wilmington Dioceses, we have seen the parish of El Quetzal and its surrounding churches and the lives of its people rise again from the rubble of the destruction created by the November 2012 earthquake.



*Picture above right: damaged sanctuary in church in El Quetzal after earthquake. Above left: Padre Regino in sanctuary of rebuilt church in El Quetzal.*

### Recent works of Solidarity (January – June 2016)

*Note correction: In the last newsletter it stated that Christ the Teacher School in Newark donated \$2000 towards scholarships. Most Blessed Sacrament school donated half of that amount and Christ the Teacher the other half.* Resurrection Parish, Wilmington, continues to contribute monthly \$100 towards medical supplies in San Marcos and \$50 towards catechist formation in El Rodeo, and contributed \$290.50 from the Alternative Christmas store.

St. Anne's School, Wilmington, contributed \$1664 to Escuela Santa Ana.

St. Margaret of Scotland contributed \$4500 towards priest and parish support, \$4500 for 20<sup>th</sup> of October Health Clinic,

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton donated \$3000 towards scholarships.

St. Matthews Parish donated \$370 towards water filters and solar lights.

The Huisking Foundation donated \$5000 for purchase of a sonagram for use at a medical clinic.

### Reflection from Toni Jennings, 1<sup>st</sup> delegation, parishioner at Ss. Peter & Paul, Easton

The country of Guatemala is breathtakingly beautiful; raw beauty. No matter where my eyes fell, there was God whispering and welcoming me for this most wondrous and joyous experience/ride. The people were welcoming and at times I felt a bit uncomfortable because they greeted and welcomed us as if we were visiting dignitaries. But those who particularly touched my heart were the children; smiles and laughter, hugs and more hugs. They might not have understood English but when asked to be goofy and make a funny face for a picture, they were more than willing and I may say, incredibly able. Hugs and smiles, the universal language and they know it well. No translation needed. *(The three pictures shown below are from the school in Santa Ana that was visited.)*

Brother Marty from the Maryknoll residence many times stressed that all that they do is for the children.

And I want to send a heartfelt thanks to everyone for this opportunity to be of some support to the people of Guatemala.



### Reflection by Karen McLaughlin, 1<sup>st</sup> delegation, Ss. Peter & Paul school

Smiles and hugs...more hugs and more smiles! The people that greeted us at every Mass, every school, every finca – everywhere – had abundant smiles and hugs for us. This was especially true of the children, from toddlers to teenagers. These precious faces only told a small portion of the story, however. Hidden behind the smiles and hugs was hunger, need, and, for many, despair. The question that kept creeping into my mind was, “Why are they seemingly so happy on the surface?” I believe the answer is quite simple: faith and hope. The youth were a prominent feature at every Mass we attended – they prayed, they sang, and they believed in God. In spite of a serious lack of education, medical care, and opportunity, these young people found sanctuary in their church and in their faith. I also believe that imbedded in their faith is hope...hope that someday they will find a way out of their poverty.

What did I learn? The people of San Marcos face insurmountable obstacles – layer upon layer of corrupt/inefficient government, a standard of living that for many is buried well below the poverty line, a broken educational system, a severe shortage of medication and basic healthcare, a lack of potable water and electricity, a thruway of drug/contraband trafficking that boosts crime, prostitution, and fear...I could go on. Churches and non-profit organizations are working to help provide some of the most basic needs; through their work in education and healthcare, in particular, many people have moved up a rung or two on the ladder of life, but much remains to be done. A newly elected government (with a comedian as president) seems to be providing a small dose of optimism, at least in the short term; the former president is in jail for corruption.

Where do we go from here? Fourteen individuals from Sts. Peter and Paul Parish and School ventured down to the southwest corner of Guatemala. We are an eclectic group of people, but we now share a common perspective and, I believe, a common obligation and opportunity to build a relationship with the parish of El Tumbador in San Marcos. God has blessed us with the prospect of expanding our reach, our knowledge, and our hearts. It is up to each of us to turn this idea into a lasting, sustainable relationship. To me, education is where we can make a difference. American philosopher Allan Bloom once wrote, “Education is the movement from darkness to light.” Yes, smiles and hugs abound in this desperately impoverished area, and, if we can bring some vestige of light to the lives behind those smiles, we will be helping to make a brighter future for some truly precious amigos.



*Pictures above, left to right: Students at San Luis school in El Tumbador get a lesson on colors; Sixth grader Jose in San Luis (having enjoyed a blue ring-pop); Mass with Padre Rigoberto and the youth group at El Rosario.*

*This newsletter is published quarterly, with input from members of the Solidarity Committee in Wilmington, members of previous delegations, or other interested parties. If you would like to contribute, please email [Pat.Sormani@gmail.com](mailto:Pat.Sormani@gmail.com). If you have a question or comment about this newsletter, please email [Pat.Sormani@gmail.com](mailto:Pat.Sormani@gmail.com).*