Community Visited: Tierra Nueva II  
Staff Person Responsible: Carrie Stengel  
Date of Report: June 28, 2016  
Date of Visits: June 26, 2016  
Cost of Visits: $19  

Next visit: August

I. Community Members Present  
   Miriam, Marleny, Albertina, Catarina, Paul, Vidalí, Yoselin, Lilian, Maria, Clementina

II. Photos

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Tierra Nueva II has started construction on the additional rooms at the back of the church. The church decided it needed more spaces for a growing church with groups that need more rooms for meetings and events. The community has decided to start building the additional rooms as they continue to fundraise for this endeavor. Church groups and committees will take turns donating their labor on their assigned work day. The Sister Parish committee has been assigned July 17 – they said anyone from St. Joan of Arc is welcome to join! 😊 See photos of this past Sunday’s work day.

The Women’s Group and the Women’s Ministry also continue to hold exercise classes multiple times per week. “There’s nothing like a Monday for exercise.” In TN2 and TN1:
III. Greetings / Community News

From SJA – I shared greetings and news from St. Joan of Arc’s most recent meeting.

From TN2 –

- Eluvia - We are thinking about Bob Heberle, as his birthday approaches, and we send Jean a big hug. We are always praying for her and her family.
- Miriam – We are so sorry to hear about Katharine and Ross’ situation. We are praying for you. We know it is difficult. We hope you are feeling more strength to keep moving forward. Greetings to my prayer partner Julie.
- Eluvia – To Mindy, Meghan, Isaiah, all who are helping the country by working for reforms for the environment, the defense of territory, for workers and immigrants, thank you.
- Marleny – Greetings to all of our brothers and sisters, especially those who are sick, those who are having a hard time. I always pray for you. May God give you strength. Hugs. And thank you to my prayer partner for sending the card. Sending you a big hug.
- Eluvia – A big hug to Rita and Jeff – I hope you are healthy.
- Albertina – Greetings and a big hug to all. I always pray for all of you. Keep going, keep moving forward. Paul, my prayer partner, may God bless you and may you keep moving forward, taking care of yourself and your family. Luis, we also pray for you and your family (my mom is your prayer partner).
- Vidalí (mother of scholarship student Lilian) – Greetings and prayers for all of you, our brothers and sisters from SJA. Thank you for your support in the scholarship program. You are all in our prayers.
- Clementina – Greetings, hugs and kisses, and many blessings. You are always in my heart, the elderly, the adults, the youth, and the children, all of you.
- Miriam – My brother, who has been in the U.S. for 17 years, was deported last week. He had already started a process with a lawyer in order to get his legal papers, but he had a car accident and the person driving the other car said it was all his fault. In the end, it didn’t matter that he had started the legal process to get his papers, they arrested him and deported him any way.
- Paul – On June 14, the women’s group hosted a group of journalists from Germany. They were writing about the situation of women in Guatemala and they are connected to the church that has also supported the parish in the past with financial support for the churches and the priests’ cars, for example. The women's group showed the journalists some of the crafts they have been working on and we also showed them some samples of the crafts we send to SJA. The journalists visited all four communities that belong to the St. Mark the Evangelist parish and they will publish an article in a magazine that they send to their donors. When they send us the link, we will share it.
- National news – The corrupt politicians that previously held public office continue to fall. Imagine. They had work and good pay. They should have had dignity, but they didn’t. Some people from TN2 have gone to the marches in the square, others haven’t. The mining license in La Puya was suspended by the courts, but the company did not suspend mining operations. Authorities reportedly found bags of gold and silver worth millions of dollars that had been extracted. Reportedly, they also found historical religious relics. These, like
many others throughout history, should belong to Guatemala, but have been taken. Everything is taken somewhere else. Guatemala is wealthy, but this wealth is only for the few.

IV. Meeting Notes

- **Skype Call** – July 31 is confirmed as the date for the next Skype call. If SJA can do 9:15am MN time / 8:15am Guatemala time, that would work best for TN2. TN2 proposes spending a few minutes talking about the proposal for a sewing machine and then spending most of the time talking about collective hopes, goals and ideas for the delegation in January. The committee in TN2 is going to try to use the Skype call to share more widely by posting photos of Minneapolis and prior delegations.

- **Scholarship Program** – Right now only 8 out of the 20 scholarship students is receiving financial support. The other 12 did not have high enough grades last quarter. If the students can improve their grades this quarter, they will receive payments both for this quarter and the previous quarter. The committee is looking at how best to support the students. They may be a little more flexible with the requirements for those students who show improvement. The parents’ committee will also talk to teachers about the possibility of extra credit work and to Children International about the possibility of including the church’s scholarship students in their tutoring program. Miriam said that many teachers are concerned about falling grades in general in the schools. Reportedly, teachers nationwide under the previous administration were encouraged to pass the majority of elementary students on to the next grade.

- **Delegations** –
  - **North to South** – People are excited and ready to start talking about what the delegation wants to do while they are here.
  - **South to North** – I am going to try to meet with TN2 about the delegate selection process in August. We will move forward with 5 applicants for the visas. I will start talking about a Plan A and a Plan B, if not everyone receives visas. If you all have any input for those discussions, please let me know.
  - **Open Delegation in November** – As a member of the *Guatemala Directiva*, Clementina will participate in the Southern Encounter in November. At this event, SP members from Guatemala, El Salvador and the U.S. will all gather to learn from each other, worship together, and dream a future together. If the delegation from the U.S. (in which Nancy, Rick and Luis will be participating) has time to visit TN2, they would love to have you visit. We have time to talk more about the details.

- **Crafts** –
  - Most of the materials have been bought and the sub-committee will start work soon.
  - **Art contest prizes** – All the prizes look great. The committee in TN2 thinks it would be better to give the prizes to individuals this time, since they did not limit participation to certain youth groups. They don’t think
that this will cause any division or conflicts because the individual did the work on the drawing or photo and the best ones will get the prize. If the contest had been a contest between groups, then it would be better to have a group prize.

- **Next courier**
  - I hope to collect some candles and any other drawings for the art contest at the end of August. At that same time I could bring any responses to *pen pal letters*. I would give all of this to SJA and can pick up anything for TN2. I will keep you posted on my travel plans.

**V. Necessary Follow-Up by SP Staff, Northern or Southern Community**

- **TN2:** Resolve any questions about the committee bank account before switching to new account. Send narrative report for scholarship project in 2015. Start talking about delegation plans for Open Delegation in November and two SJA delegations in 2017.
- **SJA:** Confirm dates for S-N 2017 delegation. Plan July 31 Skype call. Let Carrie and TN2 know what you need for N-S delegate orientations.
- **Staff:** Follow-up on scholarship program and reports (2015 narrative). Plan delegation prep meetings (N-S and S-N) August. Plan for pick-up in August.

*Sister Parish exists to foster mutual understanding and commitment to peace and justice among people in the United States and Central America. This objective is pursued through intentional linking between churches and Christian communities in the United States and Central America. Delegations travel to the North and South with home stays as an essential aspect in enhancing awareness and understanding, and in nurturing closer relationships.*