The major project of the first delegation was to develop a mission statement. Here are some excerpts taken from Norma Linseman-Schuh's writings of this experience. At the bottom of this page you will find the mission statement that still guides the hermanamiento today.

"We met as friends...always starting our days with welcoming embraces, opening prayers, songs, and laughter. Working on opposite sides of the room independent of one another, both delegations drafted separate goals as a starting point. We then shared our respective ideas, which, despite our different cultures, history and circumstances, were amazingly similar with two exceptions..."

- "At the top of SJA's list was "personal growth". For the people of Tierra Nueva Dos, that was a stumbling block. The goal of the Sister Parish relationship, they explained, is to benefit the community, not the individual. Our focus on self undoubtedly seemed out of place to people who identify so strongly with their families, communities, churches, indigenous groups and a shared economic and political struggle. It was a good reminder to be wary of the ME perspective that people blessed with abundance often develop."

- "Included in Tierra Nueva's list were the words, 'commercial (material) exchange'. That gave SJA pause for concern. We had omitted any reference to financial help by design. While we want to support the people of Tierra Nueva Dos in their struggle to meet basic needs, Sister Parish relationships are not meant to be project focused or missionary in nature... We wanted to avoid the 'big sister ministering to the little sister' implication, and rather convey our intent of establishing an ongoing relationship of mutuality. 'Although we are all children of the same God, we do not have the same resources,' said Bernardo. 'We believe that we could receive material things without hurting our dignity, but it is not material things that we expect.' 'We have integrity and do not view you as a gold mine,' added his compañero Paul."

"Collaboratively developing the mission statement was a learning experience which illustrated that both parties give and receive in a Sister Parish relationship... we managed to refine and combine our individual ideas into one, unified, and mutually satisfying statement of purpose...."

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Sister Parish relationship is to promote equality and respect and broaden our knowledge of the people and cultures of each church through sharing on a cultural, spiritual, economic, social, and political level. A special focus of our exchange is the human development of women, children, and young adults. Participating in the Sister Parish relationship will contribute to the integration and universality of the Church, which will promote communal growth. We are committed to the growth and improvement of the Sister Parish organization, which we will support through timely, ongoing communication on a national and international level.