Community Visit Report

Community Visited: Tierra Nueva II
Staff Person Responsible: Carrie Stengel
Date of Report: March 14, 2017
Date of Visits: March 12, 2017
Cost of Visits: $16.50

Next visit: April or May

I. Community Members Present
I visited TN2 with St. Joan of Arc member Louise Eidsmoe on March 12. We had a meeting with the scholarship parent board and all of the students, including the students who will enter the program this year. We also met with the Sister Parish committee members present (Miriam, Eluvia, Paul, Evelio, Vidalí, Rosario, Estela, Catalina) and with the delegates who will apply for visas to visit St. Joan of Arc in August.

II. News and photos

- Sister Parish Representatives Meeting - Representatives from Guatemalan Sister Parish communities met on March 4-5 for fellowship and to discuss Sister Parish-related business. See pictures of our meeting, hosted by the wonderful community organization UPAVIM.

- Women’s March - A group of women from TN1 and TN2 participated in the march for International Women’s Day in Guatemala City on March 8. The march itself was beautiful with lots of positive energy, though the day was also marked by a terrible tragedy at a state-run “safe house” (see below). See pictures from the women’s march on our Flickr site or Facebook page.

- News – In Guatemala, on March 8, there was a horrible fire in a locked room at a state-run “safe house” for children and youth that were removed from their homes due to abusive situations or were placed under the care of government authorities for other reasons. Even before the fire, there were widespread allegations of physical abuse at the shelter. At least 40 girls have died as a result of the fire and many remain in critical condition. The Social Ministries group at the parish for TN1 and TN2 is going to do outreach with the families in TN2 whose children were at the shelter at the time of the fire to see what they need. The Assistant Mayor in Chinateula (the municipality where TN2 is located) has offered to help the families in TN2 who were affected by this terrible tragedy. Across Guatemala many people
were affected by this incident and there have been widespread demands to hold members of the government responsible.

III. Meeting Notes

- **Delegations**
  - **North to South** – I wanted to do an evaluation of the North to South delegation, but we didn’t have time, so I will do this with community members on my next visit.
  - **South to North** – The 5 delegates who will apply for visas to visit St. Joan of Arc this August will start the paperwork process in the next two weeks. The 5 delegates are: 1) Evelio Mejía – Sister Parish committee representative; 2) Albertina Méndez – women’s group representative; 3) Olga Alegria – Ecclesiastical Base Communities or small Christian communities representative; 4) Pedro Uz – youth representative and; 5) Angel Cardona – General Coordinator of Our Lady of Guadalupe church in TN2. The visa process can take a long time, but we will keep you posted as we move ahead. When all the delegates have valid passports, I will send the information to you so that you can get started on a letter from St. Joan of Arc and letters of support from members of Congress.

- **Scholarships** – The students that will enter the program this year have been selected. The scholarship committee is still working on a final proposal for the funds from last year and the amount still needed this year. We will hopefully have that finalized in time for St. Joan of Arc’s April meeting.

- **Crafts question** – The craft committee is working on the cost estimates for the craft order and will send that when they can. Paul also had a question about the children’s aprons. On the sample they added a border with a certain kind of fabric (one with blue and one with pink). The adult aprons just have a border of black thread. Do you want the fabric border or the threaded border for the children’s aprons? If you want the fabric border, do you want 5 with the blue fabric and 5 with the pink fabric or do you want them all the same color?

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

- **TN2**: Send crafts estimates to SJA. Send updated proposal for scholarship program to SJA. Support delegates applying for visas for 2017 South to North delegation. Copy Christmas party financial report for Carrie.

- **SJA**: Continue preparations for South to North delegation in 2017.

- **Staff**: Follow-up on scholarship program, crafts project and Christmas party financial report. Follow-up on pen pals, prayer partners, etc. as needed. Move visa/orientation process forward with 2017 delegates. Do evaluation of North to South delegation at next meeting in TN2.
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.