



FIAT Happenings

Dear Friends,

I come once again to share with you my reflection on the beauty of our volunteer mission in El Salvador. We continue with our wonderful project in Las Delicias constructing 10 houses for single mothers. The building of these homes entailed clearing away the overgrowth of weeds with the use of a sickle and machete and mixing cement and mortar with buckets and shovels. After placing block after block we finished two more houses and poured the foundation for two more. These houses, six so far, demonstrate what can be accomplished through the continuous hard work undertaken by individuals and groups that have joined in volunteering with Project FIAT. This can be an inspiration to all of us in our daily lives that, step by step, you can accomplish anything with God's help.

Many of you know Don Miguel, the mason on the work sites. He was living in a home with no walls. The volunteers helped improve those conditions by installing aluminum walls. His gratitude and that of his family was obvious by the smiles on their faces.

One of our volunteer groups this past summer came up with a job opportunity for the women and men artisans that sell their bracelets and necklaces to the volunteers. The job offer was to make bracelets for their high school back in the USA. They would be paid per bracelet! The artisans got to work, formed a working group of men and women, worked in tandem to help one another fill the order and receive their first earnings.



This year we received a generous donation for the lunch program. We are very grateful. With the help of this donation, we were able to offer Cecilia, the cooking coordinator of the lunch program, a monthly stipend.

Project FIAT continues to respond to its objectives. With this response, we are also responding to the call that the Handmaids formulated in their international meeting (General Congregation XX).

From the meetings conducted at the GC XX, it was proposed to all the Sisters, the entire ACI family, and lay collaborators alike, to support a project concerned with human mobility. Our desire is to carry it out in the light of the Mercy of the Heart of Jesus:



"Let us contribute our grain of sand to the whole so that, networking, we may be able in each place to raise awareness, anticipate, welcome, support, pray, and commit ourselves to those persons in our world, especially women and children, who are suffering in the terrible situation of Human Migration."

Our grain of sand is located at the origin of the problem, which is to help people feel better in their own country.

Let us place on the paten in our Sunday mass our collaboration to build a better world, and let us allow the Spirit of Jesus to lead us.

Sister Belen Escauriaza, acj



Don Miguel Martinez has built many homes and friendships with Project FIAT over the years. A simple and humble man whose love for Jesus and Beatified Mons. Oscar Romero is evident through his words, works, actions, and song. A true blessing to us all!

This past summer, FIAT volunteers had the privilege to give Don Miguel and his family a long overdue upgrade to his modest home. The tarp that enveloped his home was quickly torn down and replaced with sturdy aluminum

siding. The roof was also replaced using the same material. The gratitude Don Miguel expressed towards our volunteers was noted in the tears that welled up as he sang his favorite song, *Juntos Como Hermanos* (Together As Brothers). "We are all one family, and my house is your house," remarked Don Miguel.

Our dream, together with Don Miguel, is to one day build his home out of block with as much love and care as he has built many homes for others.



PROJECT FIAT THROUGH THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE THEY SERVE

Can you talk about when you first met volunteers from Project FIAT?

"It is the very way in which they are....It is simply very beautiful. They came to live and work among all of us even though some of us are much older. It does not matter who is among us; the volunteers are very dynamic and filled with love for us all. Each one of the volunteers is so different. We feel the love that they demonstrate."

"Thanks to the volunteers we are able to move forward because of their help. It is a blessing for each of us. For us, the first meeting is always unique with each group. These are people that God has blessed us with. They are the people that we need."



How has your opinion changed about the program and its volunteers from the beginning until the present day?

"The arrival of the volunteers has changed me because I have learned a lot about them; that they are good people that like to be in our community. Thanks to them we now have a means of economic income for our homes and families. People are able to use our handmade crafts. We benefit much from them." (Magaly Funes)

Is it difficult for you to get to know volunteers only for a week / or for a short amount of time and then see them leave?

"Yes. It is very emotional when the volunteers come to live and work among us even though we are simple and humble people. We have an open heart. It is almost like having the same feelings as a family would. We know that some will return the next year and others not. The volunteers always remain in our minds and in our hearts from the elderly to the children of Las Delicias who we see change in just one week of knowing the volunteers. We feel as if they are a part of our family." (Ceci Rivera)

How have you benefited personally from having contact with FIAT volunteers and has it changed you personally? How has Project FIAT benefited the community of Las Delicias?

"It is an immense labor of love, a blessing especially (particularly) for our community. Personally, I have come to learn that they are helping my family by buying my personal crafts and through the new bracelet project. I have learned that theses volunteers are the individuals buying our crafts. It is incredible to see the love that they have for the children. Playing, sharing, and spending a lot of quality time. They established a clinic, library, They sponsor children to go to school and also help with other needs like the food program for the children and the elderly. You helped us along with Engineers Without Borders, with our vital water supply. Honestly, I know that I fall short of thanking you for all that you do. We / I owe you, and we know that. I thank Project Fiat, and I pray for the blessings of each one of you." (Sesi Ramires)



What does Project FIAT mean to you / for you?

"Project FIAT is an organization whose only motive is to help people through many projects that benefit the community, and we welcome the opportunity to live and grow personally..."

"For me (one of the women), it benefits me economically because I can sell my products (crafts) and that helps."

"All of the volunteers are very friendly and social. They quickly adjust to our way of life. Project FIAT is a blessing for many of us including me." (one of the women responding)

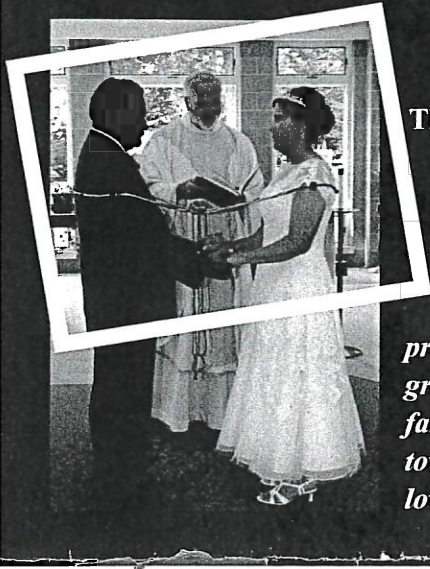
"Many thanks to all of the workers."

If you were able to say one thing to all of the volunteers that have worked in the program here, what would you say?

"...that we are here waiting for them with open arms and that we miss them very, very much..." (Ceci Rivera)



A Dream Come True



On September 15, 2017, Lynette Kyle and Miguel Delgado were United in Holy Matrimony at St. Raphaela Center in Haverford, PA. The presider at the Nuptial Mass was Rev. Herb Sperger. The following are a few words that he shared during his homily:

"When we come together in church to celebrate the sacrament of marriage, we affirm that it is Jesus himself who binds the couple together and makes them one. And that when he says to them, 'Love one another as I have loved you,' he is making them a promise: that he will always be there with them and for them. That he will give them the grace, the strength, the wisdom, the courage they need in order to love one another, their family and friends, and the people they serve, just as he himself has, and is and will be towards them. On their own, Lynette and Miguel know that they cannot be the good and loving spouses, parents, family members and friends that they so much desire to be. But with God's help all things are possible."