

A Ministry of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Winter 2018

FIAT Happenings

Dear Friends,

Each year that I write for the newsletter I am amazed at all the wonders we are doing in El Salvador.

The information that I am sharing with you today invites us to delight and thank God for how much is being realized through Project FIAT. The Handmaids sponsor the program, Lynette coordinates it, but you, our volunteers and friends, make it a reality.

It is our desire to serve the Salvadoran people, but it must not be one sided: those who receive from Project FIAT's generosity must make a commitment to also help others. We strive not to create a dependent relationship but rather one of empowerment that promotes the self-respect and dignity of each individual.

We are committed to help each person reach his or her full potential so that they can also be moved to serve others. We grow in our understanding of the Salvadoran culture, of the people with whom we minister, of their values, and of their gifts and beauty. Our Salvadoran friends, in turn, grow in the same understanding through the simple and loving service offered by our volunteers.

This newsletter illustrates the positive effect of this mutual dynamic exchange. Karla, Cesar and other sponsored students are graduating and finding their place in the work world. Don Miguel has always worked in silence, without asking for anything to better his home. His silence has been heard. Thanks to the generosity of our volunteers, land was purchased for him and his family, in anticipation of building a house in the future.

We are moving forward with building homes for single mothers; the youth of Ilobasco and of Lomas de Santiago are giving life to Sunday Eucharist through musical instruments donated by volunteers; the making and selling of bracelets offers to a small group of men and women, the opportunity of a supplemental income. The lunch, tutoring, and literacy programs, along with the purchasing of text books, continue forward bearing much fruit.

Let us continue dreaming together with the people of El Salvador towards future projects that will benefit many.



Sister Belen Escauriaza, acj

EDUCATION EMPOWERS THE YOUTH OF LAS DELICIAS



Cesar Rivera graduated as a nurse several years ago. The lack of work available made it difficult for him to find a job in his chosen career. This past year, Project FIAT was blessed to have him assist the program and its volunteers during his job search.

At the end of August, he obtained a nursing position in the home of a family near the beach in la Costa del Sol region. He is a live in nurse and cares for a gentleman with serious health issues who requires frequent monitoring. Cesar could not be happier in this new opportunity.



Dr. Karla Aguilar Melendez became a doctor of general medicine and is working in the health center near Las Delicias. Once she completes this mandatory year of service she would like to attend a Residency program where she will specialize in Internal Medicine.

Karla is living at the volunteer house and helping Project FIAT during her free time. On the weekends, she is able to visit her family in Las Delicias.



Vanessa Rivera has spent the last 4 years living with the Sivak family and attending Walsh Jesuit High School in Ohio. She is currently in her Senior year and looking forward to possibly attending John Carroll University next Fall 2019.

Vanessa is active in extra curricular activities such as: The Warrior Corps Marching Band/Colorguard, The Diversity Club and a Christian Service Program called The Labre program where volunteers make sandwiches and distribute them among the homeless.



Hiromi Acosta is studying to be a Special Education Teacher. She is currently student teaching children 6-14 years of age at a school for the blind. She feels that her focus should be on teaching the blind and has begun to learn Braille. It is her desire to continue working with the school while investigating her thesis before she graduates.

Hiromi will remain living at the volunteer house for the 2019 year and will continue to assist Project FIAT and its volunteers when able.

PROJECT FIAT AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Maeson Tydings

During my first semester I took a class on Catholic Social Teaching which helped me further appreciate the work Project FIAT does. Project FIAT helps support and elevate the small community of Las Delicias showing them the love, respect, and dignity they truly deserve. The work of Project FIAT gives an opportunity to those who would not have one otherwise, and that is the mission of Catholic Social Teaching.



Kyle Jensen

Project FIAT is a perfect example of Catholic Social Teaching because of its connection to the 7 principles of CST. The two principles that I see deeply rooted within Project FIAT are the principles of "Call to Family, Community, and Participation" and "Option for the Poor and Vulnerable." We are all called to participate in and outside of our community.

Laura Ventura

This year, I viewed poverty and institutional discrimination through the lens of the Church with the basic principles of Catholic Social Teaching in mind. Project FIAT directly connects to this curriculum's focus in that it aims to expand the public's cognizance of the poor and needy beyond our borders. It is our responsibility as stewards of the earth to care for our brothers and sisters. Too often we forget our call to solidarity with people who are not as fortunate as we.



Lauren Morris

Project FIAT captures the essence of helping the poor and vulnerable, which is a value and teaching that I want to support so that others can continue to develop homes for those amazing people I had the fortune of meeting. Project FIAT shows the dignity of all human people by encouraging volunteers to not only meet, but grow to understand the people of El Salvador.

SAINT OSCAR ROMERO OF EL SALVADOR!

The most meaningful and transformative aspect of volunteering with Project FIAT is having the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Romero has taught people, not only in El Salvador, but throughout the world, that we are each called to be the 'voice for the voiceless.' Romero was a true advocate for the El Salvadoran people, who have been victims of oppression and injustice. One of the highlights of my experiences to El Salvador was the opportunity to visit the Hospital de la Divina Providencia in San Salvador, the community in which Oscar Romero ministered. We visited his humble home in the convent, as well as the church where he frequently spoke out against poverty and social injustice. Outside the chapel was an engraved sign that read, "Monsenor Romero - Profeta y Martir (Prophet and Martyr)." The people of El Salvador always looked up to Oscar Romero for his Christ-like witness.

On October 14th, 2018, Oscar Romero was declared a saint by Pope Francis.

Kevin Moran

