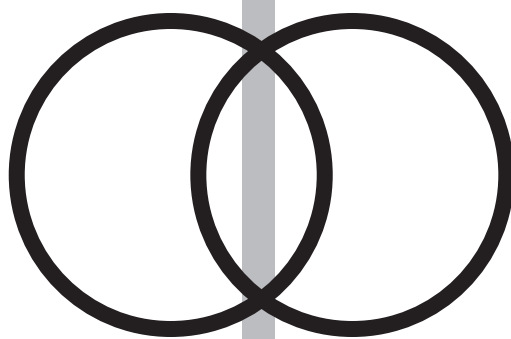


News about our Sister Parish

San Jose



Our "SISTER-PARISH" -
SAN JOSE of El Salvador.

GOAL: the goal of having a Sister Parish is to be people who grow together in faith, work together in hope, worship together in love, bear one another's sorrow, forgive one another's faults, share one another's joy, need one another, love one another, support one another, look for God in one another, see God in everyone.

**CARING, LOVING, SHARING,
GROWING —TWO PARISHES,
ONE PEOPLE OF GOD!**

A message from Padre Manuel:

Ojos de Agua,
October 28, 1996

".....We are writing to you during the feast day of St. Judas, and there is much joy among the people. We have been giving people reports of our sister parish relationship with St. Francis of Assisi. Upon hearing that it was a positive experience and upon seeing the flag that was given to us, the people applaud with joy. I am so happy to receive news from you. For me the chance to be with you was, and is, a gift from God in my life - you have evangelized me.

Greetings and blessings to all. I remember you in my prayers. Please tell Father Phil that I am enjoying my stole. Thank you, and thanks to God. Padre Manuel"

Committee Reports:

The delegations committee plans to send a small 'scouting party' (2 to 4 people) to our sister parish the last week of December.

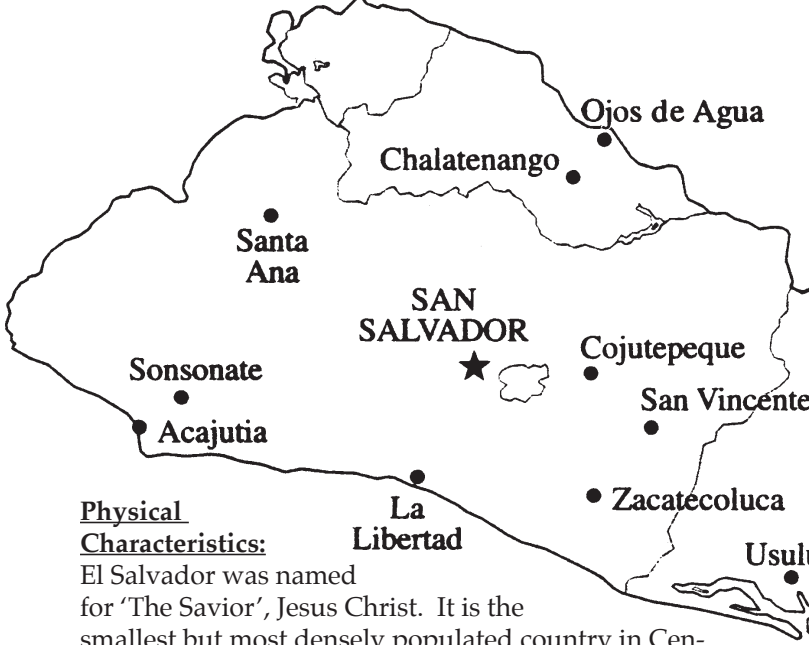
St. Vincent de Paul members collected \$2500.00 after Masses on Nov. 3rd for our 'sister parish'. This was sent to Padre Manuel to assist in the parish's first priority - training parish pastoral workers. Jeri Schultz, the interpreter for Fr. Manuel, reported a very successful pastoral course was held the second week of November.

You are invited to attend the next Sister-Parish meeting on Wed., Jan. 8th at 7pm in the

parish hall. We welcome additional committee members!

Plan to join us for a special prayer service in support of our Sister-Parish on December 2, 1996 at 7pm. A film, "ROSES IN DECEMBER", telling the story of 4 U.S. church women who were murdered in El Salvador, will be shown in Unity Place following the prayer service.

“Thumbnail” infogram on *El Salvador*



Physical Characteristics:

El Salvador was named for 'The Savior', Jesus Christ. It is the smallest but most densely populated country in Central America, and second only to Guatemala in total population. With 8,124 square miles, El Salvador is just smaller than Massachusetts. It's greatest length is about 170 miles, and greatest width about 60 miles. The land is characterized by mountain ranges, extinct volcanoes (nearly 200 of them), coastal lowlands, and a central plateau.

Climate:

Rainy season lasts from May to October, and is called "winter". The rest of the year is "summer". Most of the rain falls in relatively short evening storms. The climate is tropical in the lowlands, semi-tropical on the plateau, and more temperate on the mountain slopes. The average yearly temperature is about 75° F (24°C) and temperatures rarely fluctuate more than five degrees.

The People:

The population of El Salvador is about 5.5 million. The average population density is 686 persons per square mile. The large majority of the people (89%) are *Mestizos* (mixed Spanish and Native American), while about 10% are Native Americans and only 1% are white (mostly of Spanish descent). More than half (about 58%) of the people live in rural areas.

Language:

Spanish is the 'official' language, although Nahua and other Native American languages are spoken by many. English is often spoken among the educated.

Religion:

El Salvador is largely a Catholic nation, with close to 75% of the people belonging to the Roman Catholic Church.

About 20% practice a variety of other Christian faiths including an assortment of protestant religions.

Education:

While the overall literacy rate among adults is 65%, only about 35% of the rural population is literate.

In El Salvador, the law says that schooling is compulsory for children from 7 to 12 years of age, but since there are not enough schools, over 30% of Salvadoran children (mostly in rural areas) do not go to school. The school year begins in mid-January. Public schooling is free to all, and there are many private schools - mostly in urban areas - for those who can afford them. Most Salvadorans, especially in rural areas, can only afford to send the oldest boys to private or church supported school. Salvadoran girls rarely go to school because they must help with family work.

General Attitudes:

Salvadorans are known for their hospitality to visitors. The people love their country and are proud of their accomplishments. Salvadorans are hardworking individuals who care for others. Having endured a 12-year civil war, Salvadorans now look to their future in a peaceful democracy. Past feelings of hatred and revenge are being replaced with hope, optimism, and cooperation. Groups that used to fight each other are pledging to establish a democratic society that will represent all viewpoints. They will succeed if disagreements over the progress of the transition to full democracy and peace are settled. These disagreements include how to handle human rights violations that occurred during the war. Despite continued difficulties, people are relieved that their children's future is now more promising.

Salvadorans value the family, personal relationships, friendship ties, and security. Individualism is usually not as important as devotion to the group. Time is considered to be flexible, and all people understand that most scheduled events (especially social ones) begin late.