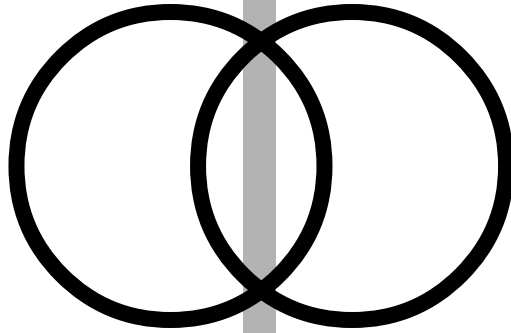


News about our Sister Parish

San José

October 1999

No. 12



Sister Parish Relationship

The following is an article (received 9/23/99) inspired by Tawnie Chute's life in our sister parish. Tawnie explains how difficult it is to walk in the light when she is surrounded by the darkness of poverty, joblessness, family separation, and lack of education. She credits her neighbor Adelia for giving her hope. Tawnie writes:

To walk by the light is to walk without fear. Adelia, like most of my neighbors, knows what it is to walk in danger. During the twelve year civil war that tore their hearts and their lives apart, they walked, ran and hid in the mountains from a repressive army who viewed all campesinos in the conflic-

When the
Darkness
becomes
Light

"God is light: in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth."

1 John 1:5-6

tive zones as present or future enemies. With post-war delinquency on the rise and the recent loss of two young men to crime-related violence, the community has every reason to be fearful again. Yet Adelia affirms her faith in life: "I was not afraid during the war and I am not afraid now. You don't die until your time has come."

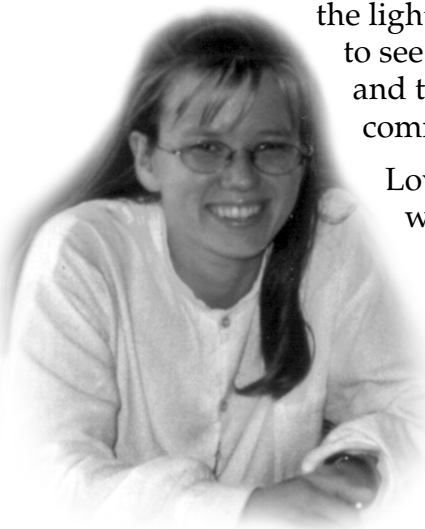
To walk by the light is to see beyond the shadow of one's own need to the necessities of the other. Adelia is a single mother of six children ranging in age from three to fifteen. Busy from 5 am to 10 pm planting corn, weaving hammocks and embroidering T-shirts, she often

complains of severe headaches born of constant economic anxieties and sharpened by neighbors' complaints about the behavior of her too often unattended children. A marginalized figure within the embroidery cooperative, she was nevertheless the one to come up with a system to provide her colleagues with maternity pay. In the ninth month of Adela's pregnancy, the group received an order. As I worked with the women to distribute the work, Adelia spoke up, "Adela can't do that." I looked toward soft-spoken Adela for confirmation of this obstacle to our careful efforts to ensure worker equality but received only a desperate "I'll try." Undeterred, Adelia continued: "Adela needs the money. But she can't work right now. We need to divide her share of the work among the rest of us and pay everyone equally." She immediately took up the most work intensive piece for herself and the matter was decided.

To walk by the light is to celebrate. Adelia celebrates life. When her daughter Brenda turned three years old, Adelia threw a party, a big party. With crops calling for attention and a rush embroidery order on the go, Adelia set aside her entire day to prepare a true feast: chicken, rice, salad, fresh pineapple juice and, most importantly, the birthday cake. Even if she had to borrow money to buy it, the celebration would not be complete without this final delicacy. Invitations generously extended brought a host of relatives, friends and neighbors onto her front porch to eat, drink and dance the night away. Startled by voices hours after I had left the party to go home to bed but too fearful to investigate, I learned the next day that at the party's end Adelia had offered refuge for the night to two nephews—on my front porch. A call to walk by the light—to walk without fear, to see beyond my own need and to celebrate with the community.

Love to all of you. May you walk in the light.

Tawnie
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QUARTERLY COLLECTION



Help light up the lives of our many brothers and sisters in El Salvador. Your contribution on October 17th will make a difference to those in our sister parish who struggle day to day to make ends meet.

AN INVITATION TO EL SALVADOR

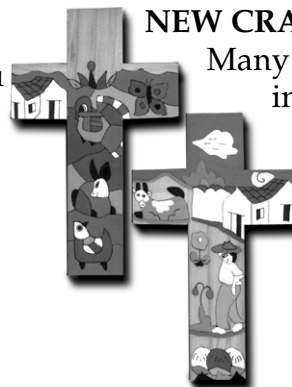


When Padre Wilibaldo visited St. Francis last April he extended an enthusiastic invitation to send a delegation to the Parish of San Jose Ojos de Agua. We plan to accept that invitation and send visitors to El Salvador in July of 2000. So far we have two women who have expressed a desire to go and we are looking for a few more parishioners that want to make the trip.

Our previous delegations have found the people of Ojos de Agua to be warm and friendly and eager to meet their brothers and sisters of St. Francis. Visitors have shared the faith and optimism of the campesinos and returned home with renewed dedication to our Sister Parish program.

If you are at all interested in spending 10 days in El Salvador, plan on attending a no obligation meeting on Wednesday, November 3rd at 7:00 PM. at the home of Rosanne and Jack Michaels. Please call 242-6972 for directions.

NEW CRAFTS COMING



Many new items from El Salvador, including brightly lacquered

wooden crosses, seed necklaces, jewelry and recipe boxes, newly designed T-shirts and pillow cases, will be available at the St. Francis November 20th Bazaar. Be sure to see them!