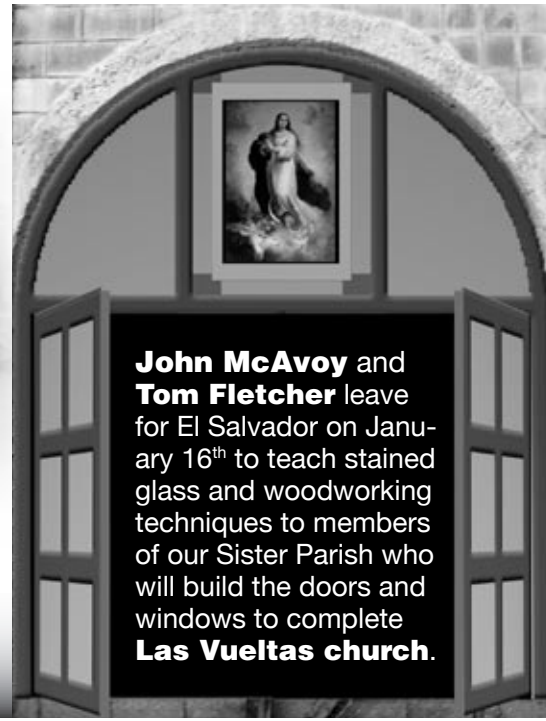


News about our Sister Parish

San Jose

January 2006

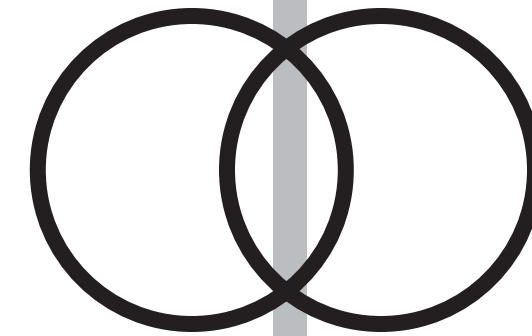
No. 37



John McAvoy and **Tom Fletcher** leave for El Salvador on January 16th to teach stained glass and woodworking techniques to members of our Sister Parish who will build the doors and windows to complete **Las Vueltas church.**

OPEN ARMS

AND DOORS



Sister Parish Relationship

Would you like to be part of our next Sister Parish delegation to El Salvador? To celebrate our 10th anniversary as sister parishes, we are planning a ten day trip in early August and are interested in adding a new dimension to the delegation—parent/child teams as well as singles and couples to further build the relationship between our two parishes.



Ojos de Agua wishes to offer. What can you anticipate during your visit? A warm welcoming upon your arrival, tasting Salvadoran food and enjoying lively folk music, living in a small village with a parish family, celebrating village Masses and special feast day rituals, visiting family farms and craft shops, viewing spectacular mountain scenery and best of all, experiencing the beautiful innocence of the children and the contagious joy of the adults.

Come feel the warmth of El Salvador, a lasting experience.

Many of our parishioners have visited Ojos de Agua and many of us have opened our homes to visitors from the sister parish. It is amazing how getting to know people from another country and culture can change your life and allow you to grow in ways you cannot imagine.



Padre Manuel is a wonderful host and is very excited at the prospect of more people-to-people interaction. He wants more St Francis families to experience the hospitality that our parish in

Because the size of the delegation is limited, you'll need to register early to assure a place. For questions and concerns, come to our Information Sunday after 10 AM Mass on Feb. 5th in Unity Place or call Cindy Murrill, 206-241-7227 or Jack Michaels, 206-242-6972.

SCHOLARSHIP APPRECIATION



Brothers and sisters of St. Francis of Assisi parish,

I greet you affectionately, wishing that the All-powerful One overwhelms you with blessings and success in your daily work.

First, my gratitude to God for allowing me to give you thanks for your unconditional help. I want you to know that I have just a short way to go to graduate with an education degree. I still have to take courses in English and computers and pass the graduation seminar. Also, I have to write and defend a thesis, but for this, I have to find an adviser. These are some of the requirements for me to graduate.

In truth, I am very thankful to you for all that you have offered me. I would very much like to help or collaborate with you in something, in order to repay you, at least a little, for what you have given me. For now, I can ask God and the Blessed Virgin to bring you blessings.

Sincerely, Carolina Nohemi Yáñez Castro

QUARTERLY COLLECTION

The quarterly collection for our Sister Parish will be taken up next weekend, January 14-15. For your convenience,



special envelopes are included in your monthly envelope package. Your generous monetary support is greatly appreciated.

"Hello, friends. I hope all is well with you. We are worried about two new planned projects that will greatly affect our people. One is a hydroelectric dam; the other, gold and silver mining. This Wednesday we will have a march to protest the construction of the projects which will be the death of our department (county) of Chalatenango. We ask for your prayers, and if you feel disposed,

please write letters to the Embassy of Canada stating your opposition."

It seems that Canada is exploring the possibility of mining gold and silver in the area of Las Flores, the town directly to the east of Las Vueltas in our Sister Parish. Padre Manuel says the entire department will suffer environmental damage if the mine is opened. Since arsenic is used to separate silver from the rock, eventually it will poison the ground water that

is used for irrigation and drinking. Additionally, people will be forced to move. And while some low wage jobs will be created, these would be only temporary, and only those technical people who can operate the mining machines would be left. According to the deal the government of El Salvador negotiated with the Canadian mining company, only 4% of the money generated would stay in El Salvador, and 96% would go back to the Canadian company.

The hydroelectric dam will displace thousands, if not tens of thousands of people, according to Padre Manuel. The country of El Salvador doesn't need the electricity, but would sell it to Guatemala and Honduras. Since this is a government project, all the money would go back to the government and not to the people affected. The people would be offered a fixed price for their land. But if they don't accept it, their land would be flooded and become useless anyway.

To voice your concern, write to The Canadian Embassy in El Salvador: Edificio Centro Financiero Gigante, 63 Ave. Sur y Alameda Roosevelt, Nivel Lobby 2 Local 6, San Salvador, El Salvador, C.A.

E-mail: ssa@dfait-maeci.gc.ca
Telephone: -011-503-2279-4655

For a sample letter or further information call Joan @ 206-242-8275.

You can also read more about this issue in the words of the people of Chalatenango province where our sister parish is located at these following website:

<http://www.votb.org/mining%20102005.htm>



A message of concern from Padre Manuel.



And Thanks...

To everyone that made our last delegation visit such a success. We especially thank the St. Francis 8th graders for raising \$2952.60 for the library in our Sister Parish and the Knights of Columbus for donating \$436 in support of the Sister Parish seminarians.