

Diocese of Metuchen Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office

Summer Service and Learning Experience with Sister Diocese of Santa Rosa,

Guatemala

FAQ's

1. Why Guatemala?

As part of the diocese, the diocesan youth & young adult ministry office supports our shepherd Bishop Paul Bootkoski's decision to develop a sister relationship with a diocese in a third world country. Through CRS there are only two U.S. dioceses that have such a relationship within Guatemala, one of them being Metuchen partnering with Santa Rosa diocese there. This was established with the hope that relationships will continue to develop among the dioceses and the people, so that, in solidarity, we may live our lives learning from them, their culture, their needs, and their deep faith as well as sharing our faith and resources with them as brothers and sisters of our same Lord and Creator.

Definitely there are many locales in the U.S. that are greatly in need of financial and physical assistance as well as bringing the love of Christ to them. However, those in third world countries have no government assistance, little to no healthcare, clean water, food, education, or work and fight malnutrition, disease and poverty that is greater than in the U.S. As Catholics, we need to continually develop both our local and international resources and concern for other human beings.

2. Why bring teens to Guatemala?

Pope John Paul II hoped that we would see all the countries in the Americas as one. Jesus brings His love to us and asks us to help the least of his brothers. The church continually calls us to care for all human beings. Even greater is the call to help our fellow believers, and Guatemala has a very large Catholic population. Teens today are in severe danger of not realizing how much they have as our culture markets to them to "have to have more." In order to create change, awareness needs to be developed, young people need to see and personally meet others who have so much less, yet joyfully appreciate people, simplicity, community, and their deep faith.

3. Why to Santa Rosa diocese?

Besides what is mentioned above, there is a good network established in Santa Rosa that is concerned for our every need. The Pastoral Office arranges our stay and ensures our safety and is with us every day. There have been nine different delegations that have gone to Santa Rosa, including Bishop Bootkoski, doctors from St. Peter's Hospital, youth and families; they are very familiar with our needs.

4. Where is it in Guatemala?

Guatemala is just south of Mexico. Santa Rosa diocese is in southern Guatemala, approximately 2 hours from the capital, Guatemala City. Santa Rosa borders the Pacific Ocean near El Salvador, and has some mountainous areas. The capital of Santa Rosa area is Chiquimulilla, a small city that is our base.

5. When is the next scheduled trip?

June 29-July 6, 2008, leaving and returning from Newark

6. What's the daily schedule?

Each day is different, but in general we have 7am morning prayer leave the hotel at 7:30am for breakfast, some days we can go to Mass, depending upon priest availability which is very limited there. We also attended a Holy Hour. Evenings we have prayer and reflection around 10pm. In between we meet people, play games with children, offer small gifts for the children, learn about their culture, work together on projects, or meet with a parish leaders/youth group. A few days are set apart for relaxing sightseeing as well.

7. Is this a mission trip or work camp?

Not exactly. Our emphasis is not so much to go somewhere and do a project to help others, then leave. Our primary emphasis is to develop relationships, to get to know and understand the people, their culture, their lives. We also do have respectfully and mutually planned projects to work with the community in assisting them with their needs. Last year, for example, at one village, we challenged the schools to a soccer match, then worked with the villagers to plant fruit trees that will provide them a sustainable food source. Our hope is that those who attend are willing to be ambassadors throughout our diocese to help support the goal to provide clean water to the villages where clinics have been established so CRS Metuchen may assist in benefiting the whole village.

8. What is needed to attend?

-U.S.passport

- health check-up and travel health preparations

-3-4 parent and teen information meetings/orientations

- permission slips

-to be sixteen years or older unless accompanied by a parent

9. What is the cost?

The cost per person is approximately \$1000. Often a parish will subsidize the trip, so that a student's family pays 1/3 of the expense. Other times a family is able to subsidize the cost completely as part of their charitable donations. We are working on scholarships. The cost covers most of the airfare, all food except snacks or food at the airports, lodging at a hotel, daily supply of pure water, all plans and supplies and pastoral staff at Santa Rosa, and medex insurance. Some of the cost is subsidized by CRS Metuchen and the Diocesan Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office.

10. Procedure

- a. find out if there is an interest
- b. invite Michael Wojcik, teens, and CRS Metuchen team members who have been there in to give a presentation on the trip and answer questions.
- c. pray and discern about God's call and people's interest to participate in this trip
- d. fill out information packets

11. Please call with any questions :

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1/10/08