

News from our Diocesan Guatemala Mission

The **Third Annual Guatemala Celebration**, hosted by the Diocesan Guatemala Commission, was enjoyed by more than 140 guests on May 18th at Barrister Winery. Honored speakers were Father David Baronti, Spokane Diocese priest serving in the mission and Sr. Janet Druffel, SSND, who has served in the mission at Colegio Nahuala and Nawal Estereo. Pictured is Sr. Janet receiving a plaque from Donna Connell, thanking her over 50 years of work in the mission.



Fr. Mike Savelesky, Diocesan Administrator, spoke of the history and importance of the mission in “partnering with the poor” as advocated by Pope Francis. The evening also featured a presentation from parishioners of the Catholic parishes in Walla Walla. The drawing for the quilt “Jazzy Java in any language” was held and Art Griff from Walla Walla won. A total of \$3579 was made from the raffle and will be given to the Religious Education program in Ixtahuacan. Thank you to all who supported the raffle!

Pablo and the other teachers of the **Religious Education program** in Ixtahuacan report that they are especially thankful for additional help with supplies from Our Lady of Fatima Parish and St. Joseph’s Parish, Colbert, as well as catechetical help from **Sr. Marie Tolle**, Sr. of Charity, NY, who works with catechists in Ixtahuacan. Pablo and the other catechists send their grateful thankfulness to people in our diocese and ask God to bless us!

Dr. Jose Miguel Vasquez, Director for the 4 health clinics, reported that they cared for 6172 persons during the last fiscal year including preparation of midwives and young leaders, vaccinations, classes for mothers, visit and support of the sick, evaluating Mayan medicine (principally with midwives), and meetings with the Public Health Ministry of Guatemala and other health organizations. In addition to Dr. Jose Miguel, there are six health promoters who work in the various clinics, and **Sr. Marie Tolle** helps with the administration/ financial matters.

Nawal Estereo, the radio station in Nahuala, was able to get enough additional funding to place a transporter in the outlying community, which enables the station’s signal to reach more people. Check them out at www.nawalestereo.com. They sent their greetings and blessings to all.

The **pastoral support in Ixtahuacan** covers the salary for Sebastian Guarchaj T. who coordinates meetings and activities for catechists and Eucharistic Ministers, refreshments for catechist meetings, the electric bill for the pastoral office and First Communion books. Sr. Marie also reported that the funds donated for **Our Lady of the Highway Preschool** paid for most of the salary necessary for the teacher, Elena Dionisio Chavajay. (We need additional funding for an additional three months.)

Fr. David reported that the monies for **student scholarships** are being divided between students in Ixtahuacan and Tzucubal. This money is necessary for any child wanting to attend school. Fr. David also reported that the money for the **Youth Group in Ixtahuacan** is given to the leaders, Rafael and Manuel and Alejandro of Simajutiú each month. It allows them to assist at diocesan meetings and to bring in speakers. Fr. David states that they “are having a major impact on the parish.”

Also, Fr. David reports that the money sent for the **Marian Center** is given to Pascual to pay his salary and help in the upkeep of the center. Pascual is also the parish secretary and is invaluable in the daily translations he provides for the daily Mass there.

Contributions to **Colegio Nahuala**, the Catholic school in Nahuala, supports teachers and staff. About 390 students in both Primario (K-6th grades) and Basico (7th-9th) attend with 6 teachers for the Primario classes and 15 for Basico. Fr. Rene, Director and Pastor, stated, “May God bless you today and always, for your generosity to our parish and parochial school”. The **pastoral support in Nahuala** is used to pay the salaries of two workers in the parish office.