

Fifth Annual Diocesan Guatemala Mission Celebration

Pictured are Bishop Emeritus William Skylstad, Fr. Manuel Nicasio, Fr. David Baronti, Bishop Thomas Daly, and Bishop Gonzalo de Villa at the recent Fifth Annual Diocesan Guatemala Mission Celebration.

About 120 members of the Spokane Community gathered at Barrister Winery on Sept. 19, 2017 to express appreciation to those who work in the remote Guatemala mission as well as those who have so generously supported them. The planned words, displays, and presentations could not, however, do justice to the thanks deserved for the years of dedicated service by those who were honored at the celebration.

Special recognition was given to Fr. David Baronti who recently retired after 42 years of dedicated service to the people of the Highlands of Guatemala - specifically the village of Ixtahuacan. Also present and speaking were Bishop Gonzalo de Villa, Bishop of Solola (Fr. David's diocese) and the young priest, Fr. Manuel Nicasio, who was assigned to pastor Fr. Baronti's flock.

As part of the program, Bishop de Villa had the opportunity to meet and to thank the wonderful people who have supported Fr. Baronti and other mission programs over the years. Before the festivities were over, many members of the Diocesan Guatemalan Commission, who have traveled to the mission in Guatemala, took this opportunity to "roast" their dear friend, Fr. Baronti, and thank him for his selfless work over the past 42 years.

The evening began with prayer and welcome by our Spokane Bishop Thomas Daly. Also included were remarks from Fr. Nicasio and Fr. Baronti as well as Brianna KostECKA, who traveled with 10 other teens from St. Joseph Parish, Colbert, to Guatemala for mission work. Pat Franz, of St. Patrick Parish in Pasco, reported about St. Patrick's many years of involvement and travel to the mission - including wonderful photos of their remodeling, painting, and building endeavors.

Thank you to all who supported our mission by purchasing tickets for the two beautiful quilts! The winners of the drawings, held during the evening, were Clarice Suko (member of St. Mary Parish in Spokane Valley) and Donna and Larry LaPlante (members of St. Peter Parish in Spokane). Congratulations to them! Monies earned totaled \$3200 and will be sent to the Guatemala Mission.

In addition to the program, participants of the event were treated to an array of appetizers and afforded an opportunity to purchase weavings, purses, and other handmade items made in our mission by participants in the Family to Family program. A few silent auction items were available to bid, including prints donated by artist Tom Shine, and tickets to Gonzaga University men's and women's basketball games.

For further information about the mission, please contact Patt Perlman, Chair of the Guatemala Commission at 509-464-1497.