

Fifth Annual Guatemala Celebration

Our Fifth Annual Guatemala Celebration will be held on Tuesday, September 19th with honored guests Fr. David Baronti, Diocesan priest in Mission, Bishop Gonzalo de Villa, Bishop of Solola, Guatemala and Bishop Thomas Daly, Bishop of Spokane. Please watch for further information. Here is a report about last year's Annual Celebration.

About 150 members of the Spokane Community gathered at Barrister Winery on May 17, 2016 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, presentations, and awards 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 Sr. Marie Tolle, SCNY, for her 36 years of work with the native Mayan people. Over the years she has helped train an untold number of native catechists and prepared countless youngsters for first communion and confirmation. The situations she has encountered in the 7,000 ft -11,000 ft Highlands range from the quiet prayers of adoration to the violence of Guatemala's civil war. Sr. Marie's gentle instruction in the Catholic faith has enhanced the lives of thousands of native people in the Highlands of Guatemala.

The missionary director of Sisters of Charity of New York, Sr. Mary Ann Daly, SCNY, came to Spokane for the May 17th event. In her response following the special award, Sr. Marie thanked (1) God and the Spokane Diocese for her opportunity to serve, (2) the native Mayan people she has come to love, and (3) her congregation, the SCNY, for sending her to Guatemala.

The Guatemala Commission event program at Barristers also included remarks from Spokane Bishop Thomas Daly as well as two other well-known visitors from Guatemala, Fr. David Baronti and Dr. Jose Miguel Vasquez. Fr. Baronti is the long-serving and 8th "*Padre de Spokane*" and Dr. Miguel is the Director of Health Clinics in the mission area. Roger and Miriam Devaney of St. Thomas More Parish, also made a short presentation describing some of the numerous Family-To-Family programs in Guatemala.

Another feature of the evening was the drawing of a raffle winner for the beautiful quilt that had been on display at 15 parishes of the Diocese over the previous 14 week period. The quilt was supplied by St. Mary's, Spokane parish quilters with finishing touches by Emily Tate of St. Joseph Parish, Colbert. Thanks to the winner (Marion Beaumier of Sacred Heart Parish), and the many others who weren't as lucky, the raffle raised \$3,782 for Guatemala Commission projects.

In addition to the award, Bishop and visitor remarks, presentation, and quilt raffle, participants of the event were treated to an array of appetizers and afforded an opportunity to make a silent bid, or purchase donated items. Among the standouts there were prints donated by artist Tom Shine, and tickets to Gonzaga University men's and women's basketball games.