

Mission Needs

Collegio Nahuala

Located in the center of the city of Nahuala is the Catholic school, Collegio Nahuala. The school, which has an enrollment of about 365 students, is under the direction of Principal Juan Fernando Tambriz. The faculty consists of highly educated and under-paid devoted teachers who are committed to the principles of Catholic Education. The school follows the state curriculum and is able to support sport activities and music. Funds from Spokane are essential to allow Colegio Nahuala to continue to offer a Catholic education in the mission.

Needs: Books for the library, white boards for the classrooms, computers, nutritional snacks, refurbishing of classrooms including 250 new chairs, funds to begin a nutritional program including a garden.

The Youth – Young Adult Program

The Youth Group, which meets every other week at the Marian Center in Ixtuachan, was formed in 2010 at the suggestion of Fr. David Baronti. The membership of the group is approximately 300 young men and women from 6 surrounding churches that are pastored by Fr. Baronti. Many of the young people walk up to an hour and a half to attend the programs and classes that are put on by the five youth group leaders.

The format of the youth group includes both a religious and social focus. As part of the religious focus, the leaders host retreats twice a year. Members of the group also attend the annual Catholic Youth Conference sponsored by Churches of Guatemala. During Holy Week this past year, members carried a wooden cross from their church to a neighboring church which was a minimum of 25 minutes away.

The youth group's social activities include the showing of Christian movies, sporting events, an annual day of hiking and reflection with Fr. Baronti, and the usual singing and dancing socials.

Needs. They need financial donations to pay part of the fees associated with field trips and the Youth Conferences.

St. Joseph Minor Seminary (located in Solola)

Although there seems to be a shortage of priests worldwide, the Diocese of Solola is very fortunate to not only have a minor seminary but to have 40 young seminarians enrolled. The faculty consists of 17 educators, including three priests. The curriculum includes courses that are required by the government with the addition of classes in the three Mayan dialects, grammar, history, music, liturgy, and religious studies. On weekends the seminarians go out into the community where they visit the sick and the poor, teach religious education classes, and organize festivals and processions.

Needs: Financial support for student scholarships and new mattresses for beds for the seminarians.

Nahuala Radio – Nawal Estereo

Since 1961, the Voice of Nahuala, which broadcasts in both Spanish and Mayan languages, has been broadcasting both religious and secular content to tens of thousands Mayans in the Highlands of Guatemala and beyond. In third world countries, the radio (not TV) and the internet are how people get their news.

In an effort to keep in contact with Guatemalans around the world the radio station has begun streaming on the internet. Now, after 55 years of operation, they have a radio station that is capable of generating enough revenue, through advertisements, to pay its current expenses, but not enough to replace worn out equipment. Most recently, the station, in effort to stay self-sufficient, purchased 2 repeaters at a cost of \$50,000 to strengthen and extend their broadcasting signal.

Needs: Replacement of the following very old equipment: Repeaters, receivers, computers, and generators (that are used to keep the station broadcasting when electrical power is lost- which happens frequently.)

Health Clinics

Since the opening of the first health clinic in the Highlands in 1964, the program has grown under the direction of Dr. Jose Miguel and the now deceased Sr. Immaculata Burke. It now includes 4 medical clinics, a midwife program, well-baby clinics, and a training program for health care promotors who staff the clinics daily.

Annually, over 7,000 patients are seen through these programs notwithstanding their ability to pay for these services. Most recently the clinics received an i-STAT, which is a piece of equipment that is able to perform 80 different diagnostic blood tests. Up until now, diagnostic testing of blood has been unavailable in the area. **Needs: Although patients are asked to pay a minimal fee if they can, additional funds are needed to operate the clinics, including salaries, supplies, medications, and electricity.**

Our Lady of the Highway Preschool.

In 2002, a preschool was opened by Srs. Immaculata Burke and Marie Tolle in a vacant building along the Pan American Highway,. The school continues to thrive under the tutelage of Ms. Elena who devotes her life to this program and the children that it serves. Each year the school starts with 25 students, many of whom are returning. Any vacancies are quickly filled by children in the community. Tuition is free and Ms. Elena's salary is paid by the Guatemala Commission. Not only do the children learn their ABC's, they are also given nutritional drinks to supplement their diet. Guatemala has the highest malnutrition rate in the world. All school supplies are paid for thru donations from the community and from the Diocese of Spokane. **Needs: Workbooks, pencils, crayons, coloring books, Legos and tables and chairs**

Religious Education Program

This program was started in 2012 by the Parish Council of Santa Catarina, Ixtahuacan, who were helping out with the educational programs for First Eucharist and Confirmation. They decided that the children needed more religious instruction and they started a program that meets every other Sunday. The program was a huge success with upwards of 500 children attending, some of whom walk several hours to attend the classes. The fact that the building does not currently have electricity or plumbing, and has holes in the ceiling as a result of a leaky roof, did not stop the lead catechists Pablo, Theresa, and Pascuel. For the first year the children sat on the concrete floor. Monies were received last year to purchase tables and chairs. Check out their Facebook Page at Programa Infantil Virgen de Fatima

Needs: Monies are needed to bring electricity to the building, lavatories/latrines need to be built, and the roof needs to be repaired. When electricity is installed, a DVD player and document camera would be a wonderful educational aid. Funds to purchase note books, pens, crayons, paper and construction paper.

Santa Catarina Church in Ixtahuacan:

Needs: Fr. Nicasio, Associate Pastor (to be named Pastor upon Fr. David's retirement) would like paint for the church. Parishioners will paint however they cannot afford to buy paint. Fr. Nicasio would also like to form a youth band/orchestra but needs instruments.

Donations can be sent to: Guatemala Mission, PO Box 1453, Spokane, Wa. 99210-1453. Please include a note about how you would like your donation to be used. All donations are appreciated