

SPECIAL EVENTS IN ALTO TRUJILLO

President Jerry Fickel and past President Marjorie O'Sullivan participated in inaugurations and blessings of two landmark buildings in Alto Trujillo during their visit in early June.

One elaborate ceremony marked the final stage of construction for CETPRO (Center For Technical Education and Production), a large adult technical school right next to San Jose Church. San Jose is Inmaculada's church and CETPRO is the fulfillment of her vision in response to earnest requests of community leaders for the means to gain good job skills and thus earn a decent living. The Center is an impressive, two-story, U-shaped structure, painted white with maroon trim. There is a large stone plaza in the center – an ideal setting for the ceremonies that included a vibrant high school marching band, speeches, prayers ribbon cutting dancers –and a luncheon!



Parade of student band, teachers, and other participants, including Marjorie O'Sullivan and Jerry Fickel of the Ministry of the Good Shepherd



New wing of CETPRO of Alto Trujillo dedicated in June

Guests from Florida included Barbara Roth of CRS and Dan Gilardi of The Father's Table Foundation. This Florida based foundation has worked through the Ministry of the Good Shepherd to provide the major portion of the funding for the Center. (Additional funds came from donors in Ireland and the Ministry of the Good Shepherd) A beautiful banner prepared by the people noted the wisdom of "teaching people to fish" and proclaimed "The poor discover their talents and appreciate their dignity." The banner expressed the gratitude of the community for the great generosity of The Fathers Table. Dan's daughter Brooke, was with him and did some ribbon cutting as well as basking in the sunny warmth and joy of the people.

Here are the classes and activities available at CETPRO- a large, productive bakery, sewing classes and production, hair styling, computer instruction, shoe making, silk screening and cooking. The equipment is top grade and some child care is available. The school is staffed by faculty paid by the government and operates under the auspices of the Sisters of Mercy. It was gratifying to meet some of the graduates who have already gone out to start their own businesses!

We attended a second ceremony on a Sunday evening. The setting was high on a sandy hill in another Alto Trujillo barrio, but far from San Jose Church. People here have been praying, attending open air masses and holding home bible studies. When Sister was in Boca Raton in March of 2009, she asked for donations to set up a modest pre-fab where people could meet. Generous donors from St. Joan stepped forward; but then Fr. Aitor Esteban, the pastor of all of Alto Trujillo, asked Sister if there could be a collaboration with the Good Shepherd and Spanish donors to build a more substantial pastoral center.



Dan Gilardi of The Father's Table passing ownership of building to Sister Aurea representing the Sisters of Mercy



Barbara Roth of The Father's Table board and CRS listening to comments of Sister Immaculada

So during our visit we celebrated the completion of this beautiful blue and white building-Luz de Cristo or Light of Christ. Again the ceremony included speeches, prayers, a bible skit (vintage Inmaculada) amazing dancers in fabulous costumes and food for 150 people-many children and babies at breast. This time Jerry Fickel's son Gabriel and his wife, Lynn were with us. Jerry reflected that in 2001 San Jose was nothing more than a pastoral center on a sandy hill –and look at it now!



Entertainment by Alto Trujillo residents at pastoral center dedication



Pastoral Center as the first permanent community building in Barrio 1-A

What animates these communities to keep striving both materially and spiritually? They are blessed with dedicated missionaries like Inmaculada and Sister Dora and Father Aitor who in turn are enabled by teams of lay catechists and leaders. It is true that the poor face a hard struggle for survival –every day – but they maintain their dignity and energy and persist in a lively faith in a living God that is ever using people to fulfill His promises. We are blessed to be able to share our resources with them and to be welcomed by them as partners and friends. We visit the missions to see the Good News lived – and we are never disappointed.

WHY DO WE GO? WHAT DO WE DO THERE?

Returning from her fifth visit with the mission community of Mercy Sisters in Trujillo and Mache, Marjorie O'Sullivan realizes that this is much more about BEING there than it is about DOING there. This is confirmed many times in conversations with the Sisters and the people. They are enormously grateful for the financial support of the Ministry of the Good Shepherd over the years (since 1991) but the visits allow us to express our support, our respect, our friendship in a much more personal way.

We can “trudge the dusty brown sands” with Inmaculada and meet the families – especially the children who are being helped. We see street children now in school because of Cristi Manceri's scholarship program; we see children of working mothers safe, supervised and well fed in the marvelous home Child Care centers; we see patients receiving dental care that is more than just tooth extraction, we see the disabled who are transported to the excellent Santo Toribio school become loved, trained and confident; we see a bustling library with a trained director guiding children to love reading and we see graduate students who received scholarships now come back as psychologists and nurses to give back to their community. It is the Good News lived!

As she peacefully steps back as president, Marjorie is gratified to welcome our new president, Jerry Fickel. He resides in Miami with his wife Ana Maria, born and raised in Trujillo. Her mother still runs a bookstore in the city center. Jerry was brought into Inmaculada's sphere of influence through mutual friends and clergy and was immediately confronted with an urgent need for healthier sheep in the mountain town of Mache. His livelihood is animal husbandry, a flock of strong sheep were brought to the mountains, and the rest is history! Jerry has been a Board member for over eight years; he is fluent in the language and well traveled in Peru and Latin America. He has become a dear friend of Sister and visits the communities in Alto Trujillo and Mache frequently. As the moderns would say, he's perfect!

As a ministry, we look forward to sustaining existing programs as well as promoting new initiatives –opening ten more child care centers, scholarships for vocational students, continuing education for CETPRO faculty. With your continued support, we are ready. Our NEXT MEETING is Sunday SEPTEMBER 19 at 2PM. Call 395-6029 to RSVP. Visit our WEBSITE: www.ministryofthegoodshepherd.org for more news and photos.