

Holy Spirit - Guatemala 2022



Two thousand miles south within a small mountain top community in Guatemala sits the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It is made up of four concrete walls, a metal roof, and a dirt floor. On what happened to be Pentecost Sunday, God called our parish, Holy Spirit, to begin building a relationship with Our Lady of Guadalupe and its surrounding community. My name is Maryn, and I was one of the seven adults on this mission. It is my purpose today to detail how we served on this mission, and, hopefully in the process, make clear the needs of the community and our prospective future relationship.

The village of La Cumbre, Guatemala consists of forty properties with three families living on each one. This totals to one hundred and twenty households, one third of which belong to the parish. The only way to access the village is a tight one-way road up the mountain, greatly restricting the opportunity and ease of mobility for the villages. Fr. Rudy and Fr. Joseph, the two local priests, each celebrate mass once a month at Our Lady of Guadalupe. The nearest school is also named after Our Lady of Guadalupe. The one schoolteacher teaches all the material to all six grades. Villagers must walk 10 minutes on steep and often slippery terrain to reach the current water source. A farmer, who lives slightly higher on the mountain than the village, restricts the water supply to have water for his cattle. Because of this, the water source can go days being empty, despite the immense amount of rain the area gets.

Our service in this community can be divided into three categories: manual work on the church, food ministry, and Children's ministry. During the week we plastered the walls of the church, both inside and out. It was not uncommon to have village kids by our sides assisting! Next, we provided \$25 worth of groceries for the twenty-five most needy families in the parish community. The food ministry opened the community to our presence and gave us the opportunity to visit homes, get to know families, and catch a glimpse of what life is like on the mountain top. Upon receiving the gifts, each family was overwhelmingly grateful to God.

Children's ministry included prayer, scripture, and community as well as fun activities like crafts, games, soccer, treats, and the occasional piñata. Mothers and grandmothers would join Kid's ministry to watch their kids and to get to know us. We were able to leave gifts of school supplies to the teacher, beanie babies to all the littles and soccer balls to the other youth of the village. All three of these forms of service gave us the opportunity to really get to know this community and for them to get to know us.



Our next goal is to get the community a consistent water source. A 60 meter well has been dug (by hand), but it is not usable without the cement piping to keep it from collapsing and other materials to secure it and provide access to the water. Additionally, the community is in great need of various infrastructure.

We hope to continue building upon the relationship with Our Lady of Guadalupe that this mission sparked. Please take time to pray and discern if God is calling you to serve on a future mission or if He is calling you to support the efforts with donations or prayers. The back of this sheet includes each missionary's most impactful moment or experience. Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us with questions about the mission or about how to get involved and help.

My name is Peter Shaw, Pedro in Guatemala! This was my first mission trip, and it was great! As the week went on, I realized just how much I worry about that in the grand scheme are nothing compared to the members of this community. When we distributed the food, I was pleasantly surprised by their view of this gift. They did not thank us directly but spoke about how God answered their prayers by sending us to them. We were the Hands of God! How often do we fail to see the gifts God gives us.

My name is Maryn Schaeftbauer and my most impactful moment from the mission happened during food ministry. When we delivered some groceries to one woman she got emotional and said "I am so grateful to God for sending you to us, He truly knows where the need is greatest." This impacted me because I could so clearly see God answering this woman's prayers. This moment was also a testament to both God's will and His power. This village is so remote and so far from our parish that this encounter had so many variables attached to its ultimate success. Because God willed it, we were able to provide a small material gift. It was, ultimately, a sign that God loves and sees this woman, this community, and their faith.

My name is Paige Cordell and this was my second mission trip, with my first being to Haiti. During both of my trips, I felt an immense amount of hope, gratitude, and to my surprise, I discovered what pure joy is each time. It doesn't matter what language you speak, I have learned that you can laugh, smile, and play anywhere and with anyone. That the differences we might share, do not matter. That is an incredible gift from God! I will always cherish those memories with the families in Guatemala

and how they seemed to feel happiness because we gave them our time and our smiles. I truly believe that God has lit a fire inside my heart, and that call is to serve His people. To be His hands and feet and to share His love with all those I encounter on my mission trips but also here at home. Thank you Holy Spirit Parish for supporting us and for all of the prayers on this journey.

My name is Danny Schiltz and I was lucky enough to go on the Holy Spirit Mission trip to Guatemala earlier this summer. The thing that impacted me most was the people. We were able to supply groceries to 25 different families that had a great need. They invited us into their home and we were able to talk to them for awhile. To witness how happy they were and how grateful to god they are for everything they have is really amazing and fulfilling.

My name is Patrick McCue. Fr. Joseph, one of the parish priests, took a sincere interest in us--our homes, families, work. He wanted to pray for us and any intentions of ours. When he learned that two of our family members back home were battling cancer, he noted their names, and they were the Mass intentions later that week. He said something to us that week that I cannot forget: "If you are sharing your time, you are sharing your life." I witnessed my fellow missionaries sharing their time, and the people of the village sharing their time. I hope and pray that I will always be willing to share my time and my life--whatever form that takes. I must say "Thank You" to the members of Holy Spirit Church for supporting us with your prayers, and to my family that is so supportive of my call to do mission work.

My name is Amy Schlup, I have blessed to serve the parish for 22 years. Our pray was as we were planning to meet the people of this village was that God would make it clear to us if this was the place that Holy Spirit was being called to serve. A place that God had hand picked for us to share our time, talent and treasures. I think after about 4hr in the village it was very clear that this is where we are supposed to be. There were a couple of moments that stood out to me. The 1st time when we walked down to the revine and to see where they would access water and no water was flowing. The question "What do you do if there is no water?" to Benidicto, who was the respected elder of the community, He said, "You just wait." How many time do we wait for anything? Let alone water. What if we had to "wait" for things, more often, how would that effect our relationship with God?

Last weekend, on Corpis Christi Sunday, my heart was a little uneasy. Our new found friends would not have a chance to attend Mass. Mass is only celebrated in the village twice a month. How many times have I taken for granted the many opportunities to encounter the Body of Christ in the Eucharist?

The other moment was when our team had gathered for evening pray, we have had prayed for You, Holy Spirit Parish, our new friends of Guatemala and our family and friends. After we were done praying we have a time to talk about the day and what we had seen and how we had experienced God. We laughed a lot and cried a little and talked about how we can get more people from Holy Spirit to be able to share in what we had experienced. We would like to invite every single one of you to pray fully consider joining us in the future. We will be going to back to this village and we would love for you to join us...

