

**DIOCESE OF JOLIET
PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION**

"I SAY YES"

"Digo Si, Señor" "Aoó, ShiBóhólnihii!" "Oo, Diyos" "Ndio Bwana"

Occasional Publication
Summer Issue
June 2008

PARISHIONER'S KATRINA MISSION TRIP WAS "WORTH EVERY MINUTE"

BY RENAY MONTALBANO

Renay Montalbano had hoped to find an opportunity to help in the rebuilding efforts since Katrina hit.

She found that opportunity in December 2007 during services at St. Patrick Parish (Yorkville), when Vern Witte and his crew received a special blessing for their mission trip to Mississippi. Renay contacted Vern and, by January, joined his four-member crew as they prepared to head to Waveland, MS, for St. Clare Katrina Recovery.

Renay was concerned about how helpful she might be because her carpentry skills were "minimal." But her group was extremely capable and generous in providing her with encouragement. "They also taught me some new skills, for which I was very grateful," she says. Other members of the crew had made many mission trips, and they shared stories of their positive experiences and the impact of their efforts, "which impressed me tremendously," says Renay.

Her arrival in Waveland presented conflicting emotions. "It was amazing to see the beauty of the area and stunning to see how much work still needs to be done. So many people still need help - not only to rebuild their homes, but to rebuild their lives as well. You cannot appreciate the devastation unless you are there to see it." Renay was deeply moved by how quickly residents had gone from living in a home to losing their homes and living in a trailer with inefficient sewer systems and facing health issues. Many local people have joined forces with people from all over the country to help get the work done, but, she notes, the very fact that they are volunteers means residents must deal with many trials and delays in getting work done.

Still, Renay says, "It was wonderful to be able to talk and assist them in getting a step closer to living in their homes, to seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. "It was worth every minute."

FAITH PROMISE DINNER 2008

SAVE THE DATE—SEE YOU THERE

FAITH PROMISE DINNER 2008

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH, 6:00PM AT

THE ABBINGTON IN GLEN ELLYN, IL

**With featured speaker, Edwina Gateley, founder
of the Volunteer Missionary Movement.**

Inside this issue:

KATRINA MISSION	1
MISSION UPDATE	1
QUITO MISSION	2
BACOLOD MISSION	2
BORONGAN MISSION	3
OTHER NEWS	3
MISCELLANEOUS NEWS	4

Upcoming Mission Schedules

- University Mission to Bolivia (6/9-23/2008)
- Navajo Mission (6/7-21/2008)
- Africa Mission to Kenya (8/29-9/13/2008)
- SWIM High School Local Mission (8/4-9/2008)
- Philippines Mission (1/30-2/14/2009)
- Quito Mission (4/17-5/2/2009)
- Sucre Mission (4/17-5/2/2009)
- National Disaster Recovery (ongoing)

ATTENTION

ALL MISSION ALUMNI

Please call or e-mail our office
with recent updated e-mail
addresses and information

THANK YOU

QUITO MISSION BLENDS RICH INTERACTION WITH SERIOUS PRODUCTIVITY

BY FATHER DON KENNEY



Image from Quito, Ecuador

Father Don Kenney recalls best how the school kids remembered the construction team and ran to meet them when they arrived.

The pastor and youths were on hand to welcome Joliet Diocesan's 15-member medical/construction team for their two-week mission to Quito, Ecuador, during April 2008. At least 12 members of the team had been with Father Kenney in Quito in prior years, so their arrival felt like a homecoming.

The medical team served between 850 and 900 patients in the main clinic, the new ed center in Rancho Alto, at the Hospital San Jose Obrero in Quito, and in the distant, poorer barrio of Mirador. "It was fabulous," Fr. Kenney reports. "They worked hand-in-hand with our two doctors and our one dentist. What I especially liked was our outreach to Mirador, a barrio which both the civil government and the Church seem to have forgotten.

"When we went there on Sunday to prepare for the mission on Wednesday, a member of the barrio council asked: 'why are you doing this for us?' One of our nurses answered: 'because you are our brothers and sisters.' Over the next year, I will probably get more involved in Mirador."

(CONTINUE TO PAGE 3.....QUITO MISSION)

CONSTRUCTION MISSION TO BACOLOD

BY TOM & LAURA BISKIE

We were both excited and a little hesitant about our return trip to Bacolod. We were anxious to see friends we had met last year, but also hesitant about how much our small group could accomplish. Although a snowstorm delayed our departure, we did finally arrive safely in the Bacolod airport about 48 hours later than planned. We went to mass in the evening at the local cathedral, which is only a few blocks from our hotel, and were pleasantly surprised to hear it celebrated in English. This was also the case at each weekday mass at the 7 AM. This was a gift, since we did not have a pastoral advisor traveling with us.

On our first full day, we visited the ERH Gawad Kalinga Village where we helped to build 3 houses last year. We met a couple of the widows who are now living there, and they were happy to show us around their new homes. The flowers outside of the homes were beautiful, and the insides of the homes were neat and clean. Natan, the local foreman from last year, also warmly greeted us. There is a new preschool building in the village, and the kids there entertained us with their songs. Eldan, who we met last year, is their teacher. That afternoon, we visited the Kasanag Gawad Kalinga Village, where we would work this year.



On our first couple of days working, we pitched in to help the workers who are building a new community center, and did some painting. The painting sounded like an easy job at first, but the surfaces of the houses were rough, the paint was thin, and the brushes and rollers were in bad shape. It took longer than expected, but we did eventually finish. The medical group went with us that week and treated patients in the village.

On Saturday afternoon, we visited the Holy Family Home, a home for abused girls. The girls entertain us with their singing and dancing. One of the dances is a traditional Filipino dance, using tinkling sticks. These are long bamboo poles. Two girls kneel on the floor facing each other and create a rhythm by banging the sticks on the floor and then together. Dancers step in and out of the space between the sticks. We all decided we wanted to learn how to do it. The girls were as amused by our efforts as we were! Bella arranged for us to meet a group of orphans at a park on Sunday. We enjoyed playing with them, and they enjoyed the McDonald's lunches and ice cream.

Monday, we tore down a shack made of bamboo and whatever wood was available. Jason, Jane and their 3 kids lived there. They are also expecting another baby. Their old home was so flimsy it only took about an hour to tear down. It was full of huge spiders, roaches and centipedes. After the rubble was removed, we began digging the foundation for the new house. The home is being built next door to the home built 1 month before our arrival by the University mission, and it is being funded by the Diocese of Joliet. Tuesday we were joined by a few people from the United Kingdom. We all enjoyed each others company and accomplished a lot.

(CONTINUE TO PAGE 4.....CONSTRUCTION..)

MISSION TEAM MEMBER CHALLENGED TO LIVE A LIFE OF THANKS, COMPASSION AND LOVE DURING “ORDINARY TIME”

BY TOM RADEL

For Tom Radel, an anesthesia instructor from Buffalo, NY, the February 2008 mission trip to Borongan, Eastern Samar, Philippines, included days filled with hard work and moments of grace.

One rainy morning began, he explains, with 8 AM mass in the hospital’s main corridor. Patients, their families, hospital staff and mission team members gathered today hand-in-hand for the service, which was celebrated by Spiritual Director Fr. Ernie as a memorial mass for Marie Lisa, an infant girl who had died at the hospital two days before.

“One of the prayers,” says Radel, “had the following phrase: ‘Lord, these parents return to you the child you sent them.’”

Later that day, a 16-year-old girl died from complications of Lupus. With her were family members, Sister Del Ray, Fr. Ernie, the Oikos Sisters, and mission

team members.

The evening before, local physicians joined the medical team for dinner, after which two team surgeons gave case presentations showing videos of laparoscopic surgeries. “This was a milestone event as we try to establish relationships with the local medical community,” Radel says. “Last night was a result of three years of work. It was well attended and very well received.

Rain continued the next day – but didn’t halt plans for a much-anticipated pool party. Radel says, “This is a tradition we started the first year, and it has become something the children look forward to when we arrive. Words cannot capture the happiness and excitement of the evening.”

Also that day, a quick inventory confirmed that supplies were holding out

very well. “Many people worked very hard packing boxes & duffel bags,” he reports. “The only glitch was one lost bag (rumor has it we can retrieve it in Manila) which, unfortunately, was full of anesthesia supplies. But we have improvised and with a little help from our local friends, we are getting through.”

The group’s last day in Borongan was Valentine’s Day, and many of the children made cards for team members. Following the usual 8 AM mass, there were three final operations – including removal of a watch battery from the ear of a 4 yr. old - and two other small cases. “We are limited as to what we can do today because we don’t like to do a big operation and leave,” he notes. In all, the group completed more than 100 procedures.

Team members sorted the remaining supplies, selecting instruments to leave in the OR and other items to store for the next trip, then attended a meeting with Diocesan and Provincial officials before leaving at midnight for Tacloban and traveling for 15 hours to New York City via Hong Kong.

Just a few hours from home, Radel was thinking of Angel, an 18-month old girl

(CONTINUE TO PAGE 4...MISSION TEAM...)

CONTINUE FROM PAGE 2”QUITO MISSION

BY FR. DON KENNEY

The construction team also accomplished great things – including building a second floor for Aleman, a local school. The school’s enrollment had increased from 110 to 180, so the cafeteria built during an earlier mission trip had to be co-opted for a classroom, and the kids had to eat standing.

“Now that the second floor is complete,” says Fr. Kenney, “the school has what it needed.”

The team also connected the school with the new barrio water supply and provided advice on a new project to connect the daycare center Miguelito with the supply.

“I know as much about plumbing and building construction as I do about the stock market, which is nothing,” he says. “But some of the construction team have real know-how, and they prevented me from making big mistakes on the contract with the local builders. They also are helping me with their ideas about a new roof for the chapel San Antonio, which is leaking badly. Without them, I would have spent a lot of your money on something which would not last.”

Throughout both weeks of the mission, there was much interaction among all participants. “We had daily Mass in English with sharing afterwards,” says Fr. Kenney. “I feel we really clicked as a team, with a great sense of community.” And team members made time to play with the kids.

“It warmed my heart. We have accomplished what we wanted: to form relationships with people of different cultures.”

Invest Your Economic Stimulus Rebate

Your gift to the Partnership in Mission will help us build a brighter future for our brother and sisters in need around the globe.

THANK YOU!

DIOCESE OF JOLIET
PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION

Primary Business Address
402 S. Independence Blvd
Romeoville, IL 60446
Phone: 815-834-4028
Fax: 815-838-8129
E-mail: missions@dioceseofjoliet.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NUMBER 7
ROMEUVILLE, IL

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

We're on the web!
www.paxjoliet.org



CONTINUE FROM PAGE 2..."CONSTRUCTION..."



We continued to make progress throughout the week, with many of the residents helping out from time to time. Even the small kids moved concrete blocks and pumped water. Meanwhile, the medical group traveled to several different locations to care for patients.

The end of the mission seemed to come too soon. But we left with a sense of accomplishment, warm memories of the people we had met, and the hope that we will be able to return next year.

CONTINUE FROM PAGE 3..."MISSION TEAM..."

at Oikos House. Angel is the youngest of six children; her mother suffers from severe post-partum depression and, several months after Angel's birth, her father was stabbed to death. "She is a beautiful little girl now," he says, "growing up in a home full of love and faith." He offers this reflection: "The Catholic Church divides the year into various seasons - beginning with Advent and Christmas. Presently we are in the season of Lent followed by the Easter season. The rest of the year is called 'Ordinary Time.'

"It is easy to focus on our faith during Advent, Lent and especially during Christmas and Easter. The challenge is life during ordinary time - the long days of summer and beyond when our busy lives engulf our every thought. "Having just completed two incredible weeks with the beautiful people of Borongan, I find myself returning to the 'ordinary time' of my life. Each day of the last two weeks, I have felt the need to pray, to be thankful for my life, to feel compassion and love towards the sick and the poor - but that is easy to do when they are staring me in the face. "How I live the next 50 weeks of my life in my ordinary time will be the test of who I am as a man, a husband, a father, a friend, a follower of the Lord".