

For all of us, Lent 2020 turned out to be quite different than we expected, and maybe different than anything we've ever experienced before. The effects of the coronavirus and how it has brought the human world to halt on some levels, and ramped up human planning and ingenuity on other levels, has been amazing to watch. And we're more than just watching it: we're all participants in it. I hope that you and your family are able to stay healthy and keep your footing during these days of uncertainty. During Lent and Holy Week, our focus is drawn to the cross and to the hope of the resurrection. That's especially true this year; the love of God is a truth that can sustain us.

One thing that can help is to realize that we're all in this together. Not just the people of our own community or country, but all the people in the world. In our day-to-day lives, we can sometimes forget that we're all brothers and sisters. Our Church, with its arms that stretch across every border to encircle us all, is a living example of that. When you reflect on the Sunday Gospel, others are hearing the same sacred message, spoken in Croatian or Portuguese or Vietnamese. Their sorrows, fears and joys are the same as ours, and like us, they pray and grow together as a faith family.

One Sunday morning in February, Fr. Bill Beuth, C.P.P.S., traveled to celebrate Mass in the village of El Chan I in the La Labor region of Guatemala. He was greeted by a handmade archway decorated with balloons. The village was celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, the patroness of its chapel. The night before, almost everybody had been up late taking part in a procession through the narrow streets of the village. There was music, followed by fireworks, followed by more music. The music carried to all the little villages in the surrounding hills, and it sounded like fun. You probably would have loved it.

The next morning, the chapel was full as Fr. Bill proclaimed the Gospel, preached, and invited all to the table of the Lord through the Eucharist. Maybe at the same time, you were receiving the Eucharist in your own parish. The Lord was inviting us all, regardless of our language, our culture or our station in life. Come to the table, God said, and partake of the feast.



**Musicians lead the singing at Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel.**