



MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

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Dear Friend,

We have probably all been in a place where we have felt alone, hopeless or maybe even desperate. There may be times when we feel disconnected from the rest of humanity – maybe even disconnected from God. At those times, when we receive a delivery of hope from the hands of our neighbors, it can be a lifeline that leads us back into the light.

Our Missionaries of the Precious Blood in ministry in Latin America seek out ways to help those in need, spiritually and temporally. For instance, in La Labor, Guatemala, they are extending that lifeline to families in the small faith communities that surround their parish, Sangre de Cristo (Precious Blood of Jesus). Years ago, with support from their friends here in the United States, they established a nutrition program that offered children a hot midday meal. Children, often with little siblings in tow, walked for miles to enjoy those meals in a community dining room.



Volunteers help out with the food distribution at Sangre de Cristo Parish.

COVID put a stop to the noonday meals. And all who had been involved in the nutrition project wondered what was happening to the children.

Then the Missionaries and their volunteers pivoted the program. They purchased food in bulk then identified the families in several small communities who were most at-risk for malnutrition. Those families were often led by single mothers with several small children.

“This pandemic time has been difficult for the whole world, and here as well,” said Fr. Abel Cruz, C.P.P.S., pastor of Sangre de Cristo. “Many people lost their jobs, many people have died. In some families, when the husbands died, their widows were not always able to get a job to make up for the lost income.”

To help, Fr. Abel and the volunteers prepare packages of food to supplement the families’ diet – corn meal, beans, rice, cooking oil, sugar, eggs and mosh, an oatmeal beverage usually eaten at breakfast. Those allotments are distributed to the families each month.

(Please detach from letter and return with your gift in the envelope provided.)

Yes, I would like to support the Missionaries in Latin America.

- I would like to make a gift of \$_____
- I would like to pledge \$_____ a month a quarter
- We will send you pledge forms and envelopes.

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I ___ have or ___ wish to include the Missionaries in my estate planning.

The people who are pitching in with the nutrition project believe that God is directing their work. One of the volunteers said that she willingly lends a hand “to see that my neighbors can receive a little help in this difficult time. It makes me happy. In them we see the face of God—Scripture tells us, ‘I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me to drink.’”

The parish could expand the program with more help from us. The need is great—Guatemala has the sixth-highest level of chronic malnutrition in the world, and the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Fr. Ben Berinti, C.P.P.S., a Missionary of the Precious Blood who is the pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Melbourne Beach, Fla., made feeding the families of La Labor a Lenten project for his parish. He makes the connection between the Eucharistic table, where the parish family shares a meal during Mass, and the table of the world. “The Eucharist is certainly a source of spiritual nourishment. Unfortunately, that can be too much of a focus, and we pretend it does not have anything to do with real hunger and real thirst,” he said. “When you receive the Eucharist, you are attempting to imitate the life of Jesus, and his life was about giving food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty.”

It costs about \$15 per month to help feed each family. With more funding, they could extend the help to more faith communities. There are 15 villages that are part of Sangre de Cristo Parish, each with its own small chapel. They are not far apart geographically, but the rough, rutted roads in the hills of rural Guatemala make it difficult to travel to the main church in La Labor.

Can we support the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Latin America as they reach out to those who are struggling? Will you support them as they feed hungry families in Guatemala and minister in other ways to help people find their footing in a world that can seem cold and uncaring?

The nutrition project is just one of the efforts by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Latin America to reach out to those in need. Will you support them in this and their other ministries? We hope you will take this opportunity to reach out across the miles to families that you will never meet and help provide them with food for their table, and spiritual sustenance for their souls. How wonderful it is to form this chain of caring that stretches all the way from our homes to theirs.

May God bless you during this holy season and bring you renewed faith and a sense that you are a loved and cherished member of God’s family. That is our prayer for you, and for all of God’s sons and daughters.

Sincerely in the Blood of Christ,

V. Rev. Jeffrey S. Kirch, C.P.P.S.

V. Rev. Jeffrey S. Kirch, C.P.P.S.
Provincial Director



Eggs are a symbol of hope and a source of sustenance.

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