



Love + Faith, Dominicana

The women entrepreneurs of the La Sagrada Sewing Cooperative have been busy; sewing many types of items, purchasing sewing machines, earning money to feed their families, feeling the pride that comes with starting a new business, and recently agreeing upon a brand name; Love + Faith, Dominicana. THANK YOU to all of you who have purchased their beautiful items.

This all began during the La Sagrada Lenten Retreat in March, 2018. To date, more than \$3,000 has been earned and sent to the Sewing Cooperative, mostly sold through events at the Cathedral of St. John Evangelist and, more recently, at St. Charles Parish in Hartland. Early on, the women were asked to individually label the items each had made so that the money could go to each sewer. They declined, saying that this is a cooperative and that proceeds will be shared equally.

Much of the sewing happens at the La Sagrada Familia Sewing Center where expert and beginner sewers of all ages gather to craft fabric bags, purses, aprons, bowl cozies and other useful items that may already grace your homes. If you have visited La Sagrada Familia, you are smiling right now because you know how much love there is in that room with women talking, laughing, and consulting about what each piece of fabric should become. Little girls watch, holding dolls, learning about the power of women working together.

The sewing machines are used commercial machines, purchased through donations. Each one costs \$300. Several women have machines in their homes, sewing in their kitchens while they prepare food or in their bedrooms while their children play around them.

What happens next is sewn goods are packed in a suitcase and sent back with visiting Pilgrims from many Archdiocesan groups, most recently a youth group a couple weeks ago. They are then sold wherever we can find venues, including two Mission Sundays, a Christmas Market, and **this weekend's Bastille Days**.

None of this would be possible without the professional, practical, loving leadership of Sister Dolores Puertolas, who is simply one of the most Christ-like and energetic people you will ever meet. Dolores also referred a colleague from Spain, Maria Jarque Vilella, who wrote her Economics Doctoral Paper on Love + Faith Dominica, and remains available to consult on business planning.

We need to thank Calico Corners in Brookfield, whose owner and employees continue to generously donate designer fabric remnant samples that make the bags distinctive. Besides these fabrics, other donations are needed:

- \$40 for each suitcase that is flown down to the Dominican Republic with fabric, and back with goods
- Money for cotton fabric, batting, and thread for bowl cozies bought online from Fabric.com
- Zippers bought on Amazon
- Money to purchase goat milk soaps made in Birnamwood, WI that we embellish for sale
- Money to ship boxes to and from Dominican Republic, so we don't need to rely as much on Pilgrims hauling them and other logistics

Any help would be greatly appreciated. In the meantime, please support the Women's Sewing Cooperative by purchasing their lovely things and letting them exude the love that they were made with. Easy, right?

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Claire Lanser (262-613-5670)