

Reflection on World Missions Lenten Pilgrimage

In March of this year we had the privilege to go on the World Missions Lenten Pilgrimage. The pilgrimage was to the Archdiocese twinning parish La Sagrada Familia in Sabana Yegua Dominican Republic. La Sagrada Familia serves 30,000 people living in 22 different towns and villages. Each day we visited many of the different towns and villages to see their chapels. We were invited into many of their homes to see their ways of life. Our trip was based around the Seven Catholic Social Teachings. We visited health, training, childcare, and rehab centers. Also, latrine projects, housing repairs, and water projects. We prayed with the parishioners every evening at mass, walked the living Stations of the Cross, and overall visited with the people of the communities.

We loved visiting the childcare centers and school. The kids were so carefree and happy. They were so excited to be in our pictures and could not give enough hugs! Each day we saw different chapels in the towns and villages we visited. Many of the chapels (one maybe two rooms) are used for multiple purposes. For instance, continuing education or as a gathering space for socialization and meetings. Our major interest was the water projects. There are three different needs for water. Water for household use like laundry and cooking, water for farming, and water for drinking. Irrigation is desperately needed for farming in the town of Berrera to help them grow crops.

The love and kindness we experienced was radiating, their simplistic way of life refreshing. These people with nothing have everything. Taking time to just “Be” with them was a life changing gift to us. The language barrier did not matter. We spoke through the love, happiness, joy, and hugs we shared. Walking hand and hand with our fellow parishioners is an experience in love everyone should have.

-Beverly and Angelle Manthey