



FALL 2013 Newsletter

Volume II
Issue II



YEAR ONE: A REPORT

by Jean Porter

"I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen."
—Frank Lloyd Wright

Just over a year ago, we created a non-profit entity to provide a greater and more sustainable structure for an effort that began nearly 27 years ago as a sister-parish relationship between St. William Catholic Church in Louisville and Our Lord of Esquipulas in Nicaragua.

Though guided by the generous kindness of experts, the truth is that we organizers had little experience at creating this sort of entity. But inspired by the passion of those who first started this work, as well as "an unremitting devotion" to ensuring the future of this work, and the prayerful and financial support of people like you, we set out. And in our first year, we can report great success:

- We have established a committee structure that streamlines our work while maintaining the "joyful messiness" of the effort that began as a sister-parish ministry.
- We encouraged the people in Esquipulas as they developed their own non-profit, which will allow them to broaden their outreach and lessen their financial dependence on us.
- We continue to deepen the relationship between the two communities, with planned delegations, establishment of prayer partnerships and actual conversations, via Skype, between us and those involved in the work over there.
- We focused our fund-raising on fewer, major efforts – grants, the fifth-Sunday collection from St. William, the sale of Kroger gift cards, a regular Sunday soup sale, and the new Solidarity Suppers. Board members and associates held five such Suppers last fall, and that, combined with a larger church gathering on the Feast of the Black Christ on Jan. 15, provided a total of about \$6,500. This year, with more Suppers, we have exceeded our goal of \$10,000. This focus on fewer fundraisers has allowed us to stabilize our financial picture -- we will begin the new year with a reserve fund that nearly covers our annual commitment to the community of Esquipulas.
- And we began this newsletter, designed to keep our supporters updated on the important work being done with their donations.

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Earlier this fall, the Friends of Esquipulas board held its second annual retreat, where we allowed ourselves a moment to bask in the success of our first year organized as a non-profit. And then, we began talking about the future.

Among our decisions during this retreat, we agreed:

- We must keep “relationship” at the forefront of all we do, making sure that deepening our relationship with the people of Esquipulas is a goal that guides every move we make.
- We should continue to empower the people of Esquipulas to make their own decisions about their projects and the way the money we raise is used.
- We should try to broaden the leadership of FE to include people outside the St. William parish, as a way to broaden the larger community’s awareness of the work and the need. Also, we hope to bring in younger people who can sustain the work in years to come.

If you are reading this and think you might like to be a part of the future of the Friends of Esquipulas, please contact one of the board members:



Executive Committee

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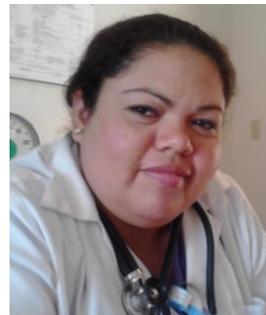
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The Organic Project

began in 2006 with 12 farmers as a way to increase income for some of the area farmers. At any one time there are about 30 farmers participating with experienced farmers graduating and making space for new ones. Typically farmers stay in the project for three years. Graduates often serve as mentors for the farmers new to the project. FE supports the project at about \$14,000 a year. This pays the salary of the technician José Bermúdez (AKA Chepe) who regularly visits the farmers and helps them learn about organic farming. It also helps pay for seeds and equipment. They grow a variety of crops and sell them at markets in the area. Cucumbers have been a big success selling at \$1.50-\$10 a bushel. Carrots, cabbage, and tomatoes are also produced. The project is successful on several levels. A healthier product is being produced that benefits both the land and the consumers. Men are able to stay with their families, pay off some debts and have enough income to help their children with school expenses. The next page has the story of a particular farmer and the biography of the technician for the Organic Project!

GREAT BIG WELCOME!!



Doctora Eunice Zeas Pulido recently joined the clinic!

The doctor is originally from León, Nicaragua and studied medicine at Unan Managua University in the capital city. She is married and lives in Esquipulas with her husband. She will continue to operate the clinic and provide regular visits to the campo, especially to follow the progress of the children whose mothers participate in the Nutrition Project. FE sponsors the doctors’ salary at the San



**Mass celebrating El Cristo Negro:
A Fiesta for Nicaragua
Sunday, January 12, 2014, at St. William 9 am**

followed by light refreshments

The Story of a Farmer

By Eduardo José Aguinaga Rosales from the
Community La Danta in Esquipulas, Nicaragua

The project has been of great value to me as a participant of the organic farming project. I have acquired knowledge along with other farmers. We have learned to produce healthy vegetables with less investment through the use of biofertilizers and pesticides which we produce from materials gathered in our own farms.

It is also important to note that the entire family including our children works together. This project also helps us avoid the need to **MIGRATE** to other places or countries in search of work. Because we now have the opportunity to work our own farms through the resources provided by St William. We no longer need to travel to other places in search of life sustaining work. We have the opportunity here in our own home.

We have learned to cultivate vegetables, non-traditional crops such as fruits and taro, taro root, passion fruit and more. We now have the expertise in the production of organic fertilizers, biofertilizers, and soil and water conservation; methods to take better care for our land.

We are able to harvest these healthy foods plus what we are able to sell, helps us have a better life. We now have the opportunity to send our children to school to study a secondary education to better themselves and have greater opportunities in their future. We have also enriched our knowledge through exchange experiences, constant training workshops that prepare us to reap better harvest, and the accompaniment by the technicians though their work and visits have been invaluable to us.

Producer: Eduardo José Aguinaga Rosales with my spouse, Señora Alicia Jarquin García and our four children: Walter Saúl Aguinaga Jarquin, Brigdania Aguinaga Jarquin, Elvis Moisés Aguinaga Jarquin, Dina Raquel Aguinaga Jarquin

In Brief: Biography of Project Technician Señor José Sevilla Bermúdez

I am José Sevilla Bermúdez. I am 48 years old, married to Mrs. Felicidad Delgadillo. We have three children and one grandchild and another to be born. From the age of 10, I learned to work the land with my parents, and I was raised in this work to my present day.

I've worked in the Church in Evangelism and Mission since 1990, and the organic project since 2007, not because I am a professional but a farmer with experience in Organic Agriculture and very willing to serve my fellow brothers and sisters in the rural communities of: Cerro del Padre, La Pita, San Francisco, La Danta, San Pedro and El Castillo, a community recently added to our project.

I have accompanied 51 rural farmers. Some of their terms on the project has ended, giving an opportunity for new members, the poorest families in the parish, to improve their standard of living. I have received constant training acquiring 20 diplomas on organic farming, pesticides, organic fertilizers, pest management, marketing and more. I have been trained to help others and prepare myself to better my life.

I also want to mention that in my visits to rural communities, I have helped other farmers who are not project participants, but I freely share my knowledge providing timely help that they may be successful with their crops.





Friends of Esquipulas

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An Outreach Ministry of St. William Community

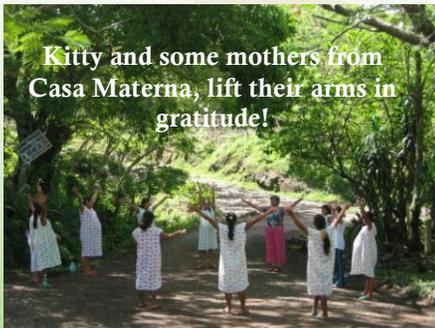
How to donate!!

Simply make your check payable
to *Friends of Esquipulas* and place it
in the collection basket or mail
to:

FE c/o St. William, 1226 W. Oak Street,
Louisville, KY, 40210

Donate with Paypal on our website:
friendsofesquipulas.org

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Kitty and some mothers from
Casa Materna, lift their arms in
gratitude!

Thanks for your support!