

**Guatemala at a Glance**  
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***We are each of us angels with only one wing, and we can only fly by embracing one another.*** ~Luciano de Crescenzo

As we close out October with the eve of All Saints, it is a good reminder that everyday we encounter angels/saints in our lives who help us "...unite God's desire and our inmost passion, praying God enlarge our hearts and free us to dare new possibilities." -- Guatemala Mission Statement.

We are truly blessed as we walk in Guatemala's reality. The Health Project is gathering signatures on a petition to the President to exonerate the project from paying a far too hefty fine on the National Tax office's charge that we are a "for profit" organization. While the mistake is theirs, the consequences remain ours. Angels from so many communities and walks of life are coming forward to offer support and encouragement. We await the presence of that same divine intervention in the latest drama facing the Education Center. The government failed to include Cooperative Education Institutes in next year's budget, effectively ignoring the 150,000 youth who benefit from this help. We depend on the government subsidy to cover half the cost of teacher salaries. This allows Cooperative Institutes to offer educational opportunities at minimal cost to poor and marginalized families. If this is not resolved, the government forces these institutes to close or become for-profit private schools. Be an angel and hold these situations in your prayers.

We recently returned from a three day-gathering with 13 of our ASC sisters hosted by those who minister in New Mexico. The sharing of life, our ministries and visioning for the future left us feeling we truly can fly!

Of course, looking at the reality of Guatemala sometimes brings us down to earth rather quickly. A few facts call us to "an openness to the cry of the Blood, which begs our response as women who embrace the spirituality of the Blood of Christ." -- Guatemala M.S.

- ❖ The United Nations report on Human Development in Central America says Central America is the most violent region in the world (with the exception of a few African nations) and that Guatemala is in 3<sup>rd</sup> place worldwide for murders. The President's comments leave us shaking our heads... "Not every county in Guatemala is violent. There are a few where no murders occur."
- ❖ The country dropped to 122 of 182 countries in quality of life. The most serious concerns are the 60% living at or below the poverty level and the minimal investment in the areas of health and personal safety. The crisis of malnutrition continues and will only worsen as the drought seriously affected the corn and black bean harvests.
- ❖ Finally, here is a concrete opportunity to support human rights in Guatemala: The Canadian gold mining giant Goldcorp attempted to begin additional mineral exploration in the Western part of Guatemala and community members rallied in opposition, fearing mining activities would jeopardize precious water resources and result in additional environmental and health impacts. Goldcorp, alongside the Guatemalan government, has consistently ignored legitimate community declarations to reject mining activities instead turning to the Guatemalan police to protect their private interests, massive advertising campaigns, employing intimidation tactics, illegitimately acquiring lands and failing to abide by community decisions to protect their rights, protect their territories and reject mining activities on their lands. Please consider a postcard or fax asking Goldcorp CEO Charles Jeannes to suspend mining operations in Guatemala given existing and continuing social conflicts caused by the presence of the mine, and respect

community rights to grant or deny their free, prior, and informed consent and community referenda. Address: Goldcorp Inc. at Park Place, Suite 3400-666 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6C2X8 or fax (604) 696-3001

So many ways we can, each of us, be angels, even with our wounded wings! Thank you for being that in our lives.

*Kris and Dani*