

Guatemala at a Glance
Informe (Information bulletin) #11 June 2009

As I write this, Dani is in Columbia, PA, and I am in Ruma, IL. We both participated in the USA Regional Assembly of our community, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ. I am struck this morning by the graces of this shared time and by a line of our Guatemalan mission statement: *"We commit ourselves to be more conscious of and celebrate the choices we do make, both personal and communal, that reflect our ASC mission. We challenge ourselves to make choices which can take us deeper to the heart of the matter and reflect the 'New Way.'"*

For us that New Way is being discovered and uncovered on Guatemalan soil. At heart, it is living what our foundress Maria De Mattias called "the beautiful order of things that the great Son of God came to establish in His Blood." Bleeding and woundedness are a very real background in this country. Our ASC presence is no accident and not simply a choice of Dani's and mine. With us stand the entire ASC international congregation, and we know a real power in that.

June has been a month of movement. Dani went to accompany our sister Maria Hughes, ASC who mourns the sudden death of her mother. Dani also made the long drive to Honduras with some of the environmental health workers and her friend and ASC sojourner Donette Alonzo. They have been consulting on a latrine project in this very remote and very hot area. We both came to the States for the Assembly and Dani goes on to Rome for a meeting of the ASC fund commission.

June has been a month of upsets as well.

- The mid-year school break was nationally extended to two weeks due to swine flu. We find this somewhat curious since there were only 78 cases reported, 72 of which were cured and classified as being comparable to severe colds. The statistics on children deaths from diarrhea probably would warrant a year-long school closing, but we hear nothing about that.
- The school subsidy checks from the government aren't coming through. Word has it they are temporarily out of funds. It's a little hard to give that excuse to teachers relying on their monthly income and ask them to be patient.
- Panama's outgoing president decided to award protected status to former Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano who attempted a coup and was forced to flee the country with a considerable chunk of its wealth. The majority of Panamanians were ashamed of the action but Guatemalans just shrugged their shoulders.

June has been a crazy weather month. We should have had rains the entire month but the first 2 weeks were hot and dry. Now the showers have started and

haven't stopped. I enjoyed the hot and dry. Dani had to slog through the mud. But then I'm older, which probably counts for some consideration!

And June has been a month of gratitude. The parish held a thank-you gathering after a mass celebrating the 50th anniversary of Fr. Bill's ordination, the visit of Fr. Paul Aumen (founder of the Guatemalan mission of the CppS fathers) and the work of Dani and Kris in the areas of health care and education. It's always fun to celebrate and we can find all sorts of reasons to do so! Even after Dani's 10-pound pack of Miracle-Gro disappeared from her luggage in the U.S., we continue to celebrate the riot of color in our yard and the proliferation of flowers and herbs.

For most of you it is summer and July 4th barbecues and fireworks are just behind you. We pray there are opportunities for gatherings that feed your souls and encourage you to be a light, an explosion of hope in your corner of this often tired world.

Kris and Dani