

REPORT OF MEDICAL, SCHOOL, CONSTRUCTION MISSION

JAN. 4-11 '09....LA VEGA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Peace! Our 32nd mission to the Dominican Republic two weeks ago was one for which I am very grateful to the Lord ...and to all of you who helped make this possible through your prayers and sacrifices.

This year we had twenty-five of us from the USA on the mission including sixteen college students from Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, a physician from Okla. City and five from the Lawrence, MA and southern New Hampshire area.

We worked in four areas: 1) a medical clinic, 2) teaching in the parish school, 3) construction and painting of the school, 4) working in the orphanage.

In the clinic 605 patients were examined and treated in four days. We gave out over \$10,000 in donated medicine. About five of the college students were in the nursing program from Steubenville. They were of tremendous help in this clinic and learned much from this valuable experience.

In the parish grammar school (K to 6) the volunteers worked with the teachers in their classrooms. A large supply of school supplies from the Lawrence and Steubenville areas were brought for the school and for each of the teachers and principal. To say that they were overjoyed to receive these supplies would be an understatement. One of our volunteers, Larry Giordano, is one of the three highest ranking Karate masters in the world, and taught Karate to each class. This was a big hit with the kids.

When we arrived there was only one functioning toilet for the school. We repaired three and put a new one in, besides repairing a leak in the main water supply that was not allowing any water for flushing. You can only imagine the great difference that this is making in the school. We were asked to paint the inside and outside of the school which truly was in need of painting. We did this and the results were quite amazing...it looks so much brighter now. We also put in ten new windows.

Some of the volunteers worked in the nearby orphanage and we all gave the orphans an unforgettable Three Kings Party with clowns, balloon sculptures, etc. Our volunteers all brought Three Kings gifts for each child. The event was most heartwarming for all of us who felt so grateful we were able to do this.

We were able to do all of this for around \$4000 since we did the free labor. This doesn't count the regular program expenses that we have each month providing for a full-time coordinator for Mision Joven Dominicana (Dominican Youth Mission), Tony Gonzalez, who spent a number of weeks preparing for this mission. He told me recently that one of the elderly couples for whom we built them a new house (10' x 11') last June was so poor and hungry that they began to sell one by one some of the

lumber we used to build their home. We're now sending them \$160 a month for them to be able to eat.

In the name of all those with whom we were privileged to work I thank you "de mi Corazon" (from my heart). Know that you are in my prayers....and I sincerely ask you for a remembrance in yours.

Yours in Christ's love for the poor,