



Newsletter for the Mission of Friendship

Diocese of Erie, USA

October 2023

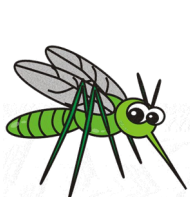
A Difficult Time at the Medical Dispensary

Dengue is a tropical disease typically spread by mosquitos. Lately, there has been a very high incidence of Dengue cases in Mérida area. Thus, the Mission of Friendship medical dispensary has been very busy providing the necessary support to our community. Most of these Dengue cases started in late August and continued through the month of September.

During these few months, the number of people coming to the dispensary with this disease increased significantly, as multiple members within the same family became ill. In addition to a medical consultation, the families were provided with follow-up until full recovery. The follow up involved frequent extra consultations, referrals for blood tests to assess improvement in platelet numbers, and notes for school to explain absences. The patients were also monitored and advised by Dr. Silvia on when it was safe to resume their usual activities.

Dr. Silvia also made use of WhatsApp messages to answer patients' questions and give them peace of mind as they recovered from this virus. Through this WhatsApp tool, Dr. Silvia was able to quickly advise patients how to respond to complications anytime day or night.

Public hospitals were saturated and did not accept patients unless they were bleeding – thus Dr. Silvia's efforts were so important. Necessary medications were sold out in many places, especially pharmacies in the south of the city. For that reason, Dr. Silvia had to buy medicines from the pharmacies in the north of the city, to help with the shortages in the Medical Dispensary (which is in the South of Merida city). We are grateful to Dr. Silvia for her efforts to help so many people during this difficult time!



So Thankful for a Great Opportunity!

(By Vanessa Chan Varguez - Administrative Assistant)

In June of 2022 I started English classes thanks to the Mission of Friendship program. Since then, I have been studying the language every Saturday afternoon. I would like to express my gratitude for this chance to take the classes and learn, since I truly think that this opportunity will allow me to provide a better support to the Mission of Friendship in the future.

I'm aware that it won't overnight, and that learning a new language takes a lot of practice. The teachers tell us that we must practice at home, so although the classes are once a week, I practice all week long by watching movies in English and by reading in English. I also practice translating Spanish texts into English.

All of this has been a great learning experience. Now, my classes have advanced to the public speaking part. We have only done two speeches so far, and the first time I was a little embarrassed to talk about the topic; my speech was about a horror movie. I know that my diction is not yet perfect, but the speech was only for the classroom. These experiences have helped me to learn proper English diction and pronunciation.

On September 15, my classmates and I did a demonstration of typical Mexican dishes. I practiced a lot to be able to give an adequate explanation and I was able to improve my speaking. Each student had to talk about a typical Mexican dish, snack, or sweets. I talked about flautas.

The process of learning grammar is particularly challenging to me. The rules of how sentences are formed, and how to make the present, past or future tenses is still tough for me. My goal is to be able to understand and speak English. I'm not at 100% yet, but little by little I'm learning to communicate in this new language!



A Delicious Experience Begins Here...

Since October 2022, two volunteers have been willing to share their talents in the preparation of pastries at the Estancia “Nueva Vida” – Afterschool Program.

Such was the motivation and selfless altruism that Teacher Gabriela and Teacher Rocio, that they have been given more than three hours of their time every Thursdays to prepare and delight the palates of the girls and the staff of Nueva Vida.

To this day we continue to count on their support; they are now teaching the Nueva Vida’s staff to prepare and sell these delicious desserts in the community, among close neighbors and families. They are inspiring staff with another way to earn income for day-to-day program needs.

“The goal is to have more resources to be able to continue preparing delicious desserts for our community on a regular basis.”



Introducing a New Member of Our “Amiguitos” Team



My name is Mercedes Del Carmen Gómez Uc, I graduated with a degree in education, and I am a new member of the Los Amiguitos daycare team, as a teacher of the little ones in kindergarten 1, ranging in age from 18 months old to two and a half years old.

We work on the areas of motor skills, language, cognition, and emotions, as well as the values of respect, responsibility. My experience working with the little ones has been very nice since I have realized that as a teacher, I not only teach but I can also learn from them.

The work environment with my colleagues is very pleasant; we all coexist and support each other in many ways both in the children’s learning and for our own learning. We share ideas and strategies about what we think will provide a better learning experience for all the little ones in the nursery. We also work collaboratively, when planning events at the Daycare.

I like the fact that here we all can participate in the conversations and contribute to it with our own ideas, since it is what I like to see in a work environment in order to foster personal development. In the same way, this will help the children learn to live together and feel good about being here.

Being part of the Erie-Yucatan AC has taught me that we never stop helping people who need us and that if it is up to us to support, we will do it from our hearts.

Let’s welcome Mercedes!!!

A Fun Activity at the Daycare

On September, Los “Amiguitos” Daycare Center carried out a family activity, that was attended by mothers, fathers, uncles, aunts, and grandparents. The activity was called “SPORTS DAY” and featured outdoor activities, with the goal of having our children spending some time of entertainment and relaxation, outdoors, in the company of their family, based on the well-being that these kinds of activities provide to boys and girls.



Outdoor activities help to develop children’s personality, socialization with their peers and people around them, as well as ease of self-expression. It was a pleasure to see the response of each of the families, and this reminds us that our goal is to provide the children from Los Amiguitos with a comprehensive education, shared with their families.

Special Greetings from Colonia Yucatan
Sister Parish- Beloved Disciple Church, Grove City

Dear friends,

It is my pleasure to send our hugs and warm greetings to all of you.

We have had several events recently that have been such blessings. I'd like to share a little about them with you:

First, we celebrated the feast day of our Patron Saint in the month of July with a huge influx of people. It was truly overwhelming! However, we were well prepared so that everyone felt comfortable and eager to participate. New this year was that the statue of Mary went in the "Ruedo" (procession) in Her honor, and that we celebrated Her on the very day of our Patron — July 16th. This public procession was a great way to evangelize the neighborhood and welcome people back to the Church, and with this event we hope to open doors for them to return home... the Virgin's home!



(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page — Sister Parish- Beloved Disciple Church, Grove City)

Secondly, we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, which belongs to our community of Puerto of “El Cuyo.” It was a blessing and great joy. On this occasion, there was an important return of some who were far away, as well as others close by who rediscovered their faith and spirituality. This year the image of the Virgin of Mercy was carried to the “Vaquería”— the town's festival in her honor.



Next I'm please to announce that we already nine out of the 17 chapels in our area have been out-fitted with full audio equipment. The most recent community to get the audio system was the Teapa: , a small but emerging community with great enthusiasm. The community of Teapa has been proclaiming the Gospel more effectively with the help of their new audio equipment, for which they are infinitely grateful.

Also in the Parish we celebrated the Week of the “Palabra” (Word), with some activities in which we had read, reflected, and shared God’s Word, as a light for our steps. Finally, we closed the week with a community blessing of everyone’s Bible.

In closing, I wish to say that my great enthusiasm continues to be for evangelizing our brothers and sisters who are returning little by little to the Mother Church. Spiritually I feel more blessed, happy, and accompanied by you, our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as Our Mother. Thank you for all your prayers and help from a distance, be very blessed with the grace of Our God.

Sincerely,



Fr. Gaspar Humberto Pacheco- Cetina.

Another Inspirational “Amigos” Testimony

Hello, my name is Jhoana Jossette Leon Perera. I am 24 years old and I just graduated with my bachelor’s degree in nursing thanks to a lot of work, and the support of my sponsors from the Diocese of Erie.

When I found out that I had been admitted to the Nursing Program at the Autonomous University of Yucatán, I thought it would be an enormous challenge because, despite being a public university, nursing is a very expensive course of study. This was a great concern to me and my family, but my desire to study, improve myself, and build a better future was even greater.

Early on, some friends recommended to us this great and generous Amigos Program that benefited me a lot and was an enormous help. Since my family has limited resources, the Amigos Program greatly reduced my mother’s financial concerns as I attended university.

The financial support I received from my sponsors was used for transportation and school supplies, in addition to books and uniforms. Having this support motivated me to get good grades, learn everything that the teachers taught about my (future) profession, to be a good professional and not disappoint the people who were (and are still) my support. Even now that I have finished school, my sponsors helped me with the payment of my title and professional license. I truly hope that they are proud of my achievement, because in fact it is also theirs.

The nursing program required four long years of studies and hospital internships, where my sponsors and the Amigos Program were attentive to me month after month. Even during the pandemic, they did not stop supporting me in significant ways. To me they were the light that illuminated my nights of study and sleeplessness, and day after day they motivated me to be better and work hard in school.

The last year of my studies I carried out my internship at the New Maternal and Child Hospital, which is located an hour away from my house by public transportation. It was a challenging year, but it was a year full of knowledge and experience because I put into practice everything I learned.

Now that I have completed my bachelor's degree, my interest is to continue to stay up to speed with the latest in nursing with short courses, and to study the specialty of surgical nursing, which I think I can afford with the job I do.



I thank all the people who were willing to support me and my family, to make this dream of mine come true, for making my path smoother and for reducing my mother's financial worries.

Thank you very much, greetings and blessings.

Note From the Director's Desk

Dear Amigos,

Happy Fall to all!

As usual I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Amigos Program, Nueva Vida Program, and Sister Parish Program participants for the marvelous support you give to our sisters and brothers in Yucatán. Just a reminder, the Mission Office in Erie continues to receive the donations sent by Amigos sponsors, Nueva Vida sponsors and Sister Parishes by way of checks and online credit card contributions. These funds will be wired periodically to the mission account in Mérida.

Amigos sponsors can send special donations, in addition to their regular monthly contributions, that are earmarked specifically for their particular sponsored family as Christmas gifts, Easter gifts or birthday gifts. **These special gifts are not added to the common Amigos fund. They are kept separate to be given only to the sponsor's particular Amigos family.**

Again, please remember that all of these above donations are still to be sent to the Diocese of Erie Mission Office. Thanks!

Some Important Announcements

Silvia, the Amigos Program Coordinator in Mérida, asks all Amigos sponsors who wish to send a monetary Christmas gift to their sponsored families in México to make sure to send those contributions to our Diocesan Mission Office in Erie, **by November 30**, in order to assure that your family will receive their gift before Christmas Day. However, gifts received after that date will still be given to their recipients in México, but delivery will probably be sometime after Christmas.

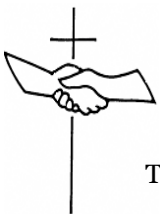
The Mission of Friendship is participating in the 2023 #iGive Catholic campaign, known as **Giving Tuesday**. This year it will take place on November 28, 2023. Please support our ministry by making an online donation to the Mission of Friendship. Visit our website: <https://erie.igivecatholic.org/organizations/mission-of-friendship-society-for-the-propagation-of-the-faith> or use the QR code below. Online donations will open on November 13. You can also send a check (with #iGive Catholic-in the memo line), to the Mission Office at any time between now and November 28.

The Sister Parish Program has not undergone any changes at all. Each Sister Parish in Yucatán receives the monetary contributions made by their specific Sister Parishes in the States.

With any blessings,

Indira Suarez





Mission of Friendship

Mission Office of the Diocese of Erie, Indira Suarez, Director

429 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504

TEL: 814/824-1231 FAX: 814/824-1264

is Suarez@eriercd.org www.ErieRCD.org