



Missionary Fraternity of Mary Newsletter Spring 2018



Entrance to the Fraternity

**“We believe in the
same God.”**

John, MU High School
Student

“Joy and happiness in the absence of abundance...”

“I knew they’d be poor, but I didn’t expect them to be living in those conditions,” said John, a senior at Marquette University High School in Milwaukee, after a recent trip to Guatemala, his first time visiting a Third World country along with others from the Fraternity’s Twinning Partner in the USA, Lumen Christi Parish in Mequon, Wisconsin. “There would be 4 or 5 people living in a single room that’s smaller than my bedroom,” he went on to observe. John’s twin brother and classmate at MUHS, Daniel, who accompanied him on the trip, was also moved by the poverty he witnessed and was struck by the “tin-sheet houses” and “lack of plumbing”. In a talk before a group of seminarians Daniel commented, “I see so many good and beautiful things in your country but I also see some that could be improved.” Both were struck with the warmth and faith of the people they met.

It was a welcoming environment

John and Daniel had travelled to Guatemala to visit some of the Missionary Fraternity of Mary's mission outposts and its Seminary. In Guatemala City, the boys met Fr. Silvano, whose three mission parishes are in crime-ridden, poor neighborhoods. "They offer clean water and give food to the poor," said John of Fr. Silvano's parishes, "plus the sacraments." Inside a city that is notorious for crime and violence, Fr. Silvano's parish "brings people together and offers them a safe place," said Daniel, who was most impressed with the community-building aspect of the Fraternity's mission parishes.



Daniel with Seminarians



John having fun with seminarians

The boys also toured the Seminary of the Missionary Fraternity of Mary, which is in Guatemala City. "I didn't expect it to be inside the city," said John, who described the city as "all walls of concrete and barbed wire." Visiting the Seminary "...was like stepping into a different universe," explained Daniel. "Outside, there was traffic and motorcycles, general congestion, and inside: just small white buildings interspersed among lush landscaping." The boys visited the chapel, the administrative offices, the gardens, the dormitories and the farm and chicken coop, which the Seminarians use to support themselves. The twins also saw a

newly-added conference room that the priests were particularly excited to show them, since it was built recently with donations from the United States. “It was a welcoming environment,” said Daniel. “They had mass for us, but we were late, and they still waited for us patiently in the chapel with candles lit the whole time,” John added.

I could see God more clearly there saying the Rosary...

A memorable experience for the boys was climbing an active volcano, Mt. Pacaya, with Fr. Jaime and some minor seminarians, teenage boys who study at the Seminary. The volcano had erupted a few years prior, so there was a “heat vent” over which the boys all roasted marshmallows. Hiking with the seminarians meant a lot to John and Daniel because “we got to see how much they were like us, joking around and having fun,” said John. The boys likened the seminarians’ educational experience to their own at MUHS, an all-boys Jesuit school: “We believe in the same God. We are so far away but believe in the same things.” At the top of the volcano, overlooking the country-side, the boys prayed the Rosary together. “I could see God more clearly there saying the Rosary with them than sitting in my room,” said John, describing the impact of the prayer experience in the beautiful setting with their Guatemalan peers.

The boys were likewise inspired by the Missionary Fraternity of Mary priests they met. “They do it all because of faith,” said John referring to the generosity of spirit that the priests exhibit in the way they care for others. “I was struck by how motivated they were and how proud they were of their work,” added Daniel. They met Julius, the first seminarian from Kenya to enter the Missionary Fraternity of Mary. “He had so little but was always grateful for what he had” said John. He was always smiling and joking, even when no one else was happy.”

Seeing the way the Missionary priests help other people “inspired me to want to help others,” said John.

The twins’ trip to Guatemala will not soon be forgotten. “It’s an experience you keep in your mind,” Daniel said. “It reminds you of how good you have it, and that there can be joy and happiness without an abundance of worldly goods and comforts.”

John & Daniel at Lake Atitlan



Top of the Volcano



All contributions are tax deductible and are used exclusively for the work of the Fraternity in Guatemala and its missions worldwide. For more information or to mail contributions, please send to:
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