



Roots of Change Foundation
Source de développement
 Bringing hope to people in need
www.rootsofchange.ca

Summer 2024
Newsletter

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul funds Latrines and Water Purification Filters

Improper sanitary conditions in communities affect the health and well being of its people. In many parts of Nicaragua including San Benito which is only 30 kms north east of Nicaragua’s capital Managua, the image above is typical of these conditions.

To the left is an abandoned latrine which is no longer usable and, in the centre, the current latrine of the Ocampo family. Eveling Ocampo (women on the left), a beneficiary of the project, communicates with FUNDACCO staff, Luis & Harol and María Pérez, a representative from the Agrícola Coloney.

Thirty-six families of the Agrícola Coloney now benefit from the installation of 13 latrines and 23 water purification filters. Financing for this project was provided by Conferences in Ontario through Saint Vincent de Paul’s Twinning Program. SSVF’s counterpart in Nicaragua work closely with FUNDACCO which manages the supply, installation, training and community input of these infrastructure projects.

Chronic kidney and parasitic diseases experienced by adults and children in this area created a great need to manage open sewage and the treatment of drinking water. Rainy seasons cause contamination of poorly constructed water wells and leave families with few choices when looking for clean water sources.

With help from community leaders and representatives of SSVF, FUNDACCO interviews and selects those most in need – which is a necessary but difficult task.

Cont’d on page 2



Beneficiaries from the Agrícola Coloney in San Benito receiving water purification filters

Missionaries of Love by Joey Spiller



Joey Spiller with a friend from El Zapote

My name is Joseph Spiller. Earlier this year, I went on a two-week mission trip to Nicaragua with my dad. Although I have been to Nicaragua three times before, each trip provided diverse experiences; this trip was no different.

There are many aspects that I could write about. For example, the poverty that existed in El Zapote, where I worked, or the fact that 80% of the families for whom we built latrines did not previously have a place to “go.” However, the most profound experience and difference in this trip was realizing where I am in my personal life. I reflected a lot on what it means to be on a mission trip.

What do we do? Sure, the work my dad and I did helped some people, but is it really about the kind of work we did? Is it about how much money we raised, how many latrines we built, or how much we worked?

I realized that the purpose of these trips is love. Christ said, “even as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34).

The people of Nicaragua need our financial, laborious, and spiritual help. However, if these actions do not come from love, they bear no fruit. If the goals of Roots of Change and FUNDACCO were only financial or material, mission trips would not be needed.

Father Denis recognized that the groups from Canada communicate the love with which the work is done. This lesson follows us home and helps us to realize that everything we do in our daily lives must be done in love, and in this way, we become missionaries not just in Nicaragua but on home soil as well.



All beneficiaries are interviewed and information is collected which forms an important part of documenting the project.

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul funds Latrines and Water Purification Filters *Cont'd from page 1*



Beneficiaries and community members play an important role in the logistics of moving materials to the latrine sites.



Julio Rizo member of the National Council of Saint Vincent de Paul Nicaragua speaks to San Benito community members and beneficiaries of the project

As in all infrastructure projects, beneficiaries and community members form an important part by investing time and labour to complete the project.

In addition to providing the latrines and water filters, the community benefitted from seminars and discussions around hygiene and practices to minimize exposure to existing health hazards.



Beneficiaries aid in the construction of latrines, a process which is closely monitored to insure they meet minimum standards



Delivery of the concrete bases and seats for the latrines. Installation is by workers skilled in masonry & metal fabrication.



Eveling Ocampo, beneficiary of the project

Trochu Fundraising Dinner a Great Success!

On June 15, 2024 approximately 45 people from St. Anne of the Prairies Parish in Trochu gathered to raise funds for Roots of Change.

The goal was to raise money for new latrines in La Carreta, a community in the northern part of Nicaragua where the Olds/Trochu delegation put in a water system in 2017.

Many families in this community do not have a latrine of their own and depend on their neighbour to use theirs.

A simple meal of Mexican enchiladas, lasagna, salads and desserts was prepared by the Committee and enjoyed by all.

Roots of Change President, David Frechette and Board Member, Angy Spiller were also in attendance. After a short presentation, given by Marian Cloutier who spearheaded fundraising efforts, donations were gathered and the generosity flowed!

Altogether, this small but mighty group of people raised \$12,800! In the end, enough to build at least 20 new latrines!!

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to this great project!!



Mayorga Espinoza Family are waiting for a latrine of their own.

President's Message

Dear donor;

It's a real joy for me to give you some news and to reach out and Thank You personally for having made our 2024 fundraiser such a great success. With your generosity we have met our objective and are now assured of meeting our obligation to FUNDACCO.

I am so humbled by your steadfast support and so pleased that we are adding new people to our great family of donors which leaves me in awe at your generosity.

When I call to personally thank donors, the reoccurring reason I receive for being a donor is the fact that almost all of their donations are sent to Nicaragua and that very little is used for administration purposes.

Yes, indeed being a volunteer working board we cut down immensely on operational cost. All Board members give of their time freely so that more of your donation is sent to FUNDACCO where it is so very well spent on projects that sustain hope and improves the quality of life immensely.

I sincerely believe that Father Denis left us a winning formula and is interceding for all of us to be blessed with the joy of making a real difference in this world. God bless you and please tell your family and friends to join this winning group of people by donating to Roots of Change.

A dollar a day, given through a monthly automatic withdrawal, will hardly be noticed but the good it will do in Nicaragua is immense especially if over 100 people do this.

My hope for all is that someday you will have the chance, as I have had, to visit the recipients of our donations in Nicaragua. If you want to experience it first-hand, join my wife Suzanne and I for a 2-week trip scheduled to depart in February 2025. *Cont'd on page 4*



Fr. Curtis Berube

(image courtesy of the Edmonton Archdiocese)

We are excited to announce that Fr. Curtis Berube of the Archdiocese of Edmonton will be leading a delegation to Nicaragua to continue the work in El Zapote, a very poor community north of Chinandega.

The delegation will continue supporting the community by installing more latrines and assisting with a house build.

If you are interested in joining Fr. Curtis on this Faith Learning opportunity, please contact Fr.

Curtis at curtis.berube@caedm.ca or olpeace.innisfail@caedm.ca.



I was born on November 25, 1987 in a small rural community called El Nancital No. 2, Municipality of San Francisco del Norte, Department of Chinandega, where I lived until I was 18 years old.

I am number 7 of 8 siblings; my father is a farmer and delegate of the Word of God in the area, my mother is a housewife.

I finished my primary education at the community school. The secondary school was located 12 kilometers from the community, a distance we almost always walked to get to school and back. With difficulties and effort I finished my secondary studies.

After high school I longed to study university. However, my parents did not have the means to pay for my university studies, so I had to work in agriculture with my father like many young people in the countryside. I lost hope of continuing my studies and focused on supporting my parents financially.

At 18 years of age I moved to Somotillo in search of work, where I had my first formal job in a Customs Agency at El Guasale, a border post with Honduras. This process was quite difficult since I had to be separated from my family and I also had to leave the coordination of the Youth Ministry of 6 regions served by the organization El Bloque, under which I had trained and worked.

In 2008, due to the good relationship between Father Denis and the members of El Bloque, he asked them for the name of a person to be part of the FUNDACCO work team in the formation of a group of farmers from the San Benito Agricultural Colony. The members of the team thought of me as the person to recommend. I was very excited and I accepted the proposal, thinking that it would be the opportunity to enter the university. It was so. In April of that same year, I moved to Managua to work for FUNDACCO and in that same year, my first daughter was born. That was a very special moment in my life.

In 2009 the Foundation's Scholarship Program began. Cont'd on page 4

In late April-early May my son Joseph and I went to Nicaragua for a two-week Missions trip. The highlight of this trip was the opportunity to travel to the village of La Caretta where I had been on a previous mission in 2017.

We had installed a water cistern, pump and distribution lines to 48 homes in the community. The electric well pump installed in 2017 was having trouble maintaining the needs of the village. Another participant from the 2017 trip, Marian, raised funds for a larger capacity pump. On this trip we were fortunate enough to return to La Carreta and help install the pump giving the village the added water capacity they needed.

In 2017 two of my sons and I were graciously hosted by our wonderful "momma" Dominga. On our first day of that trip, I noticed Dominga praying with what I thought was a Rosary each night. The Rosary was in many pieces and she had the beads arranged on her table with a couple of candles and pictures of Mary and Jesus.

The following night I asked if I could pray my Rosary with her during her pray time and she said, "yes". Each night for the rest of our stay I prayed my Rosary with Dominga with her speaking in Spanish and I in English. It was a very rewarding experience to be able to grow closer to Christ with my new friend. Before I left on that first trip, I gave Dominga my Rosary and told her it was gift to her from me and that I would pray for her and her family.

In May this year when we had finished installing the new pump, I had the opportunity to go to Dominga's house and surprise her. She was so excited. We hugged, shared a few tears and had a chance to catch up. She inquired about my two sons Daniel and Billy, who had stayed at her house the last visit.

Dominga's daughter was there and she spoke a little English which helped to translate our conversation. She told me that after we left in 2017 Dominga learned all of the prayers of the Rosary and that she has prayed it nightly for my family since we left in 2017 and that one day we might be able to return to Nicaragua and see her again.

Hearing this took my breath away. I was absolutely floored, that someone would be praying for my family and myself for over five and half years. It was truly overwhelming. As I caught my breath, I realized that her prayers were answered and here we were together once again.

When I go on missions trips it is not be recognized or share in any accolades but to simply try and make a Godly difference in someone's life. I never expected that someone I had only lived with for two weeks would diligently keep me in their prayers for not just days or months but for years. It brings tears to my eyes and warmth to my heart that a simple gift of a rosary had such a profound impact on Dominga's life and on my own.



Improved Kitchens and Water Purification Filters for El Platanal

Through the generosity of a single donor who has sponsored many such projects in the past, 25 families in El Platanal are benefiting from 9 Improved Kitchens and 12 Water Purification Filters.

El Platanal is a rural community made up of 250 people (42 families).

Located north-east of Chinandega and like many rural communities, families are engaged in agriculture as the only means of living. Produce is used mainly for family consumption and the surplus is sold in a local market to acquire other products for family consumption.

Improved Kitchens (or cooking stoves) greatly reduce the amount of smoke from the daily activity of cooking on stoves made of rock and mortar. Breathing and lung diseases are prevalent in families using these traditional stoves.

Cont'd on page 4



Living the Legacy Part 4- Harol Osmany

Andrades Alvares cont'd from page 3

Father Denis knew about my intentions to study and offered to help me through a scholarship to study Social Work and Development Management from 2009 to 2013. The hope was that it would lead to a career with a focus on community work.

Since 2008 I have been collaborating with FUNDACCO through different programs and projects, working for the common good using actions and strategies that allow us to respond to daily needs. FUNDACCO has been like my second home, where without a doubt, I have learned many things. I have had difficult moments in my life, but also moments that have filled my family and me with great joy. I am very grateful to God, Father Denis and FUNDACCO for influencing and believing in me, for filling my life with hope. From my position as Project Coordinator for FUNDACCO, I look for ways to help many families.

I am very grateful to Roots of Change for the enormous efforts made every day to help several Nicaraguan communities. I have a deep gratitude to you sponsors, who help us without knowing us. You are changing lives, just as my life has changed for the better. **God bless you!**

President's Message Cont'd from page 2

Contact Angy Spiller at angy@rootsofchange.ca to make known your desire and/or to answer questions you may have.

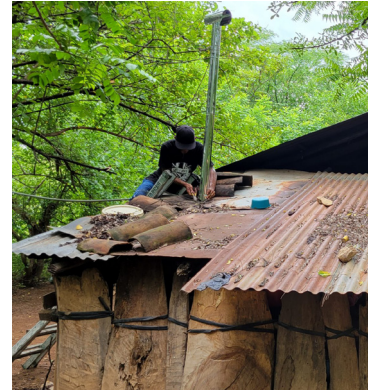
Cher amis

C'est avec une grande joie que je vous fait part que notre soirée prélèvement de fonds le 1 juin a été un grand succès. Grâce à vous nous pouvons bonifier nos engagement envers FUNDACCO. Suzanne et moi auront le privilège de ce rendre sur place au Nicaragua en février 2025 pour constater encore une fois à quel point nos dons rehaussent l'espoir et redonnent aux pauvres leur dignité humaine. Si c'a vous tente de vous joindre à nous, laissez nous savoir. Nous seront heureux de voyager avec nous. PS c'est très sécuritaire de voyager avec nous.

President David Fréchette



Improved Kitchens and Water Purification Filters Cont'd from page 3



Water Purification Filters reduce the illnesses caused by the consumption of contaminated water. Family and community wells are often polluted by surface water during the rainy season.

For more information on projects like these that benefit the health and well-being of the Nicaraguan people, please contact us at info@rootsofchange.ca or visit the Roots of Change website to make a donation.

Roots of Change Board Meetings

All are welcome to attend our online board meetings

For dates and those wishing to attend please send an email to info@rootsofchange.ca

For more information www.rootsofchange.ca

Please help by supporting this ministry of hope

2023-24 Board of Directors

Officers:

President - David Fréchette
Vice President - Rod Valdes
Secretary - Lucille Damer
Treasurer - Mel Kammerer
Project Administrator - Ken Handford
Donations - Carolina Correia

Directors:

John Schile - Scholarships
Angy Spiller - Delegations
Danielle Nobert-Halvorsen
Phil Schmidt
Lloyd Arcand
Charla LeBlanc

Would you like to get involved or have a talent to share?

We are always looking for people who would like to help us in our **Mission of Hope** for the Nicaraguan people.

If interested, contact us at info@rootsofchange.ca to learn more about how to get involved.

The goal for our 2024 campaign is \$140,000.

The estimated cost of printing and mailing 3 publications per year is \$2,400.

For information contact Jocelyne Durocher at 780.405.8084

PayPal Giving Fund

PayPal Giving Fund Canada provides a method to make a credit card donation that eliminates the fees the Foundation would normally be charged which is between 2- 3% of the donation - and every penny counts!

Search for "PayPal Giving Fund" in your browser, click on 'Donate Here' then search for Roots of Change Foundation.

PayPal Giving Fund Canada will provide a Charitable Donation Receipt for your donation and we will be notified once it is processed.

Registered Charity Number 81320 5077 RR0001 ~ Canada Revenue Agency: <http://www.canada.ca/charities-giving>

Incorporated in the Province of Alberta - Licence 319837