

Report of the Companion Diocese Committee to the 228th Annual Diocesan Convention

2011 was an interesting year for your Companion Diocese Committee. We maintained a prayer relationship with the Diocese of Ecuador Litoral, headquartered in the southern seaport city of Guayaquil. It is expected that this will continue in the same manner.

But the Diocese of Ecuador Central, New Jersey's working partner, endured internal strife and discord during the last year resulting in the resignation of Diocesan Bishop Luis Ruiz. As interim successor, Bishop Victor Scantlebury is guiding the diocese; the reunification and healing have begun. It will be a long road but it will be done with God's help. Your prayers are sought.

Despite it all, the strength of our relationship was never in question. In February, along with Bishop Councill, Fr. Pedro Guzman, Fr. Harry Mazujian and I traveled to Quito and attended the Diocesan convention and visited outlying parishes. We worshipped at San Felipe, Ibarra and in a store front gathering in Tulcan, a drug route on the Colombian border. And, high in the Andes, a five mile drive up a dusty rutted road and then another mile walk, we were welcomed in a remote and isolated village – four mud walled buildings, two bare light bulbs and twenty- two sister and brother Anglicans. They opened their arms with warm hugs; they opened their homes and fed us; and, they opened their hearts, as we worshiped together, as one.

And, while the situation in Quito necessitated the cancellation of two scheduled visits, the CDC supported our Ecuadorean friends in other ways. Reflecting the growth, influence and leadership of the indigenous within the Episcopal Church, a new deanery in Chimborazo Province was opened and a second priest was welcomed. With parish and individual support of the CDC's Count Your Blessings appeal, NJ was able to fund the purchase of a small truck for the newly ordained, Fr. Luis Alberto. His ministry takes a leap forward with a motorized vehicle as he travels to his people in rural hamlets miles from paved roads and cities.

Through the generosity of a New Jersey priest, a special collection at his ordination provided funds to print and distribute Bibles throughout the diocese of Ecuador Central, in Quechua, the native language of the indigenous. With your help, thousands of worship service guides are now also available in Quechua. To the clergy of NJ, a special thank you. Your Clergy Day collection guaranteed the continued education of a young seminarian.

And, in what I hope will be just the beginning, direct parish to parish communications were initiated between children of Calvary (Flemington) and Cristo Liberador (Quito); and, St. John's (Somerville), and San Felipe (Ibarra). It will take patience and persistence to grow this ministry but grow it we must. Children everywhere are our future

Thank you all for your support for the ministry of your Companion Diocese Committee. We represent you. 2012 will be an exciting year as the new leadership in Ecuador reunifies and reenergizes the people. We need each other as we continue our journey with Christ.

If it pleases the Convention, the Companion Diocese Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, asks your approval to re-affirm the formal companion relationships with both Litoral and Central, for an additional three years, through 2014.

Respectfully submitted,
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Companion Diocese Committee
Chairman