

## **Report of the Companion Diocese Committee to the 230<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention**

Starting this year, our committee has established companion relationships with two dioceses in Ecuador: In addition to the Diocese of Ecuador Central, which stretches along the country's mountainous Andes plateau, we are now working with the Diocese of Ecuador Litoral, located along its coastal region.

A major issue in both dioceses is the scarcity of adequately trained priests. At the request of the diocesan bishop of Central, our committee is supporting a young deacon's seminary studies in the Dominican Republic for a year by contributing \$7,600 toward his tuition, travel and a large portion of his living expenses as he prepares for the priesthood.

Four of our members attended Ecuador Central's diocesan convention in Quito and visited churches in outlying areas. At the convention, the Rev. Sal Ros, a new member of the committee, presented a workshop on stewardship and financial management, conspicuous weak spots in the diocese.

The relationship between the bishop and clergy of Ecuador Central has been strained for several years. This November, the Rev. Pedro Guzman, CDC Chair, and the Rev. Servio Moscoso, attended the diocese's annual convention. Through a series of one-on-one and group meetings they believe that they have achieved a genuine breakthrough in the healing process in which the two sides agreed on several issues that had long been in contention. We see this as a truly significant accomplishment.

Much needs to be done in Ecuador Litoral, a vibrant but financially strained diocese. The Revs. Debi Clark and Mark Van Sant led a youth group from our diocese there this past summer, both to get acquainted and to work alongside local youth groups. We have donated funds to establish a Tilapia breeding project in Litoral that is expected to provide food and an income stream for a local parish. We have also funded the much-needed renovation and building of cabins in a diocesan camp. We have committed to purchase land upon which Santisima Trinidad Iglesia will erect its first church building. They have been meeting in a parishioner's home. We expect Ecuador Litoral to be the primary focus of our committee work in the coming year.

Both Bp. Scantlebury of Central and Bp. Morante of Litoral attended Bishop Stokes' consecration in November. Our committee arranged their accommodations while here and gave them a thorough briefing on our own diocesan operations. We believe this will help build mutual understanding and further strengthen our relationship with our companion dioceses.

We look forward to a busy and productive year ahead. We would like to note that, although the CDC's budget has not increased since last year, our committee is now serving two dioceses rather than one. While this may tax our ingenuity, we believe we will continue to make significant contributions to both in support of God's important work in Ecuador.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Canon Pedro Guzman, Chair and Mr. Paul Murphy, Vice-chair

February 1, 2014