

The Peace of Jesus be with you!

My name is Leila Mello, I was born in Sao Paulo, Brasil (with S) and my native language is Portuguese. I met my husband Juan Delgado in Brasil, and he asked me to come to this marvelous country and be a family.

I personally don't believe that terrible things have to be happening for you to be close to God.

But, our daughter Victoria, arrived in our lives in a very special way, very preemie (4 months early due) and weight 1 lbs. 12 oz.

That was a very hard experience to me. Without my immediate family near me and not knowing the languages (English and Spanish), you all can imagine!

Padre Pedro Guzman being my husband friend and Pastor, visited me and my daughter in the hospital and always said that all congregation was praying for us and that I should always trust God.

After 3 months and one day, finally Victoria was discharged, never had a "set back" even though her critical condition, but my husband and I saw God's calling at least 5 babies in that 3 months period.

Very thankful to San Andres Congregation, we brought our daughter to be present to God and to the temple. After 2 years, my daughter starts to talk, walk, take away people's attention of their prayers, I started dedicate myself to the children in San Andres.

People that "uall" know asked me to talk to you How do the Way of St Paul is alive in San Andres.

Well, I am a member of the Team of the Way of St Paul Program in San Andres and also a Coach in a Pioneer Group of Coaches of the Way of St Paul Program, too.

In 2015 a group of 16 people including my daughter and I, dedicated they time and talents to the Project Way of St Paul. During 18 months (the first round) and after 7 months-brake-training to became a coach. We are now in the Second Round, with the First Spanish Deacon of the Dioceses of New Jersey Jorge Martinez, who is very engaged in programs as the Committee for the School of Deacons and Task Force for the creation of school for Sacerdots, Deacons, lay and clergy continuing Education Committee

In this period of time, we improved, implemented and deleted projects, and also:

1. We could understand and know each other better as persons, no saying "that person from the church"
2. We learn how the Episcopal Church is organized and how it works better, having in mind that many of us came from other denominations churches.
3. We learn that Prayers have a magnificent power, that gave us the necessary courage to go out in our neighborhood, knocking doors and introducing ourselves to them and asking

them how better could we serve them, and how to pray for them. 150 Families opened their doors for us.

4. We learn that in every little thing that we program to do, we must have asked “Where is God in this?” to be successful.
5. We learn how better coordinate the liturgic calendar with activities and proposals for better serve our community.
 - Healing Mass on Thursdays are very powerful.
 - Visiting the sick people and the ones who are in jail is also very powerful.
 - Retreats for couples
 - Retreats for different proposals are also very powerful
6. We learn how to deal with the 21st Century Technology in ways to improve our communication (between ourselves and our community)
 - If you (who speaks just English) visit our church in Sunday Mass, you can follow the lectures in the projector in a big screen in English, so welcome!
7. We learn to organize ourselves better and select activities pro-funds, so this way we can improve the Spiritual Quality in our congregation, for our parishioners, visitors and friends:
 - *Food Bank (once a month all year.
 - *Festival de San Andres – former “Kermesse” (always in June or July)
 - * Puerto Rican Parade (after Festival San Andres)
 - *A day in the river or lake (whole families)
 - *Bookbag blessing (where we donate school supplies for those low-income families)
 - *Pets blessings
 - *Camden Alaba al Senor – one day of prayers outside our building with the partnership with churches with other denomination this will be the 3rd year (100 a 250 people attending)
 - *Trip to the Caribe (All inclusive resort)
 - *Cruise Trip
 - *Trip to the Holy land (this will be our first in Nov. 2018)
 - *Ashes to Go

Communion with other Churches for us all to grown

* Camden Christmas (a union project involving 3 churches: Grace Church in Haddonfield, Church of the GoodShepherd in Pitman, and San Andres in Camden – a big success since 2015– this past year St Paul in Camden hostess the event, with the Blessing of our Bishop Stokes)

* St Florian's blessing with the presence of Gloucester County Fire Department and mass for recognition of the acolytes with Christ Church in Woodbury.

* Food to the Homeless in St Paul Church in Camden (all year around)

2017 was a year where 2 big natural disasters hit families and friends from San Andres congregation members - Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Mexico.

We got in communion with Camden City and County, Hammonton, North Jersey and so many more to make a Marathon where we collected food, water, medication, clothes, etc. And an amount approximal of \$16,000.00 divided into the 3 countries and delivered personally by the members of the San Andres Community Center (institution that was form by San Andres Church and was sleeping for a while – now is awake and ready!).

A group from the San Andres Community Center:

Padre Pedro Guzman, and his wife Dr. Odeida Dalmasi (one week in the island),

Juan Delgado (member of Iglesia San Andres), Margarita Colon (no member), Douglas Utley (no member) and Ramon Gonzalez (who became a member as soon he came back from PR with his wife Maribel Gonzalez) – they stayed in the island for 1 month and 12 days.

In this period, this group got in contact with the Diocesis Episcopal de Puerto Rico with the Bishop, Rafael L. Morales Maldonado and they helped each other.

What did they do?

Well, with the money from San Andres Community Center, they were able to buy wood to properly frame roofs and place the blue tarp on it. (They also did that in some houses that Fema just gave the blue tarp).

Juan Delgado sent 2 arm trucks to the island, and with the help of Ramon Gonzalez, Margarita y Douglas, they could help the Dioceses of P.R. to distribute food and goods for families in isolate areas from the rest of the island .

The City of Camden also did a Marathon called UNIDOS A PUERTO RICO – PUERTO RICO UNITED and the actual mayor of the City Mr. Frank Moran and Nilsa Cruz-Perez who represent the 5th Legislative District in New Jersey, they raised an amount approx. \$116,000.00 for Puerto Rico.

The Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez contacted Juan Delgado and together they delivered a check with the amount of \$25,000.00 to the Dioceses of Puerto Rico to help them in their mission to help those in need.

In February 3rd , 2018 was celebrate the First Gala of San Andres Church.

This event was created by members of our Congregation: Architect Donaldo Vidal and his wife Fabia, as well our Deacon Jorge and his wife Luz Liriano, and Padre Pedro and his wife Dr. Odeida

Dalmasi and totally approved and supported for all the Ministries and Members of San Andres Church.

With a vision a little beyond from where we could see, they came with the idea to reach out Altruistic people who wants to collaborate with a good cause, without the need of became a member.

With all the hard worked involved, God in there, and the blessings of our great Bishop Stokes "Chip", the Gala was a success!

We keep in constant work to grown in faith and to help Jesus in His Mission, and this is how the Way of St Paul program still alive in San Andres Episcopal Church, in Camden New Jersey.

God bless you all!