

2018 Honduras Medical Mission Summary Report

The 2018 Medical Mission to Honduras was sponsored Christ Church of the Ascension, Paradise Valley, Arizona, and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Fincastle, Virginia. Additional support was provided by the Episcopal Diocese of South Western Virginia, Prince of Peace Church, Melbourne, Florida, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Phoenix, Arizona and Church of the Good Shepard, Galax, Virginia. Fifteen team members participated from nine churches in five states. They included three physicians, a certified physician's assistant, a pharmacist, two lawyers, a health care worker, an engineer, a dentist, and five lay people. All felt called by God to serve on this mission to Honduras.

The mission was held this year for the third time at Iglesia San Marcos, on the highway along the coast near Puerto Cortes, a large port city on the Caribbean coast of Honduras. The clinic building is attached to the church, which serves as our host church in Honduras. The site had been renovated two years ago prior to our visit to serve as a permanent clinic. The renovations provided the team with an excellent facility to see patients. Importantly, parishioners of San Marcos assisted in all aspects of the clinic and were a key to the success.

Bishop Lloyd Allen prayed for our mission. The team joined the parish in the Sunday worship service, led by Fr. Roberto of Iglesia San Marcos.

The Honduran support included: 7 student interpreters from the local St. John's Episcopal school, a bus driver, 5 patient registration workers from the church, the parish priest, and the diocesan representative.

VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE MISSION

This 2018 mission team treated 320 adults and 200 children for a total of 520 patients. Patients' ages ranged from 6 months – 92 years.

A total of 1240 prescriptions were filled for the 519 patients. Diagnoses included: bronchitis, intestinal parasites, arthritis and/or skeletal muscular disease, gastritis, headaches, hypertension, constipation, diabetes, otitis media, dermatitis and dental disease.

At the completion of the mission, the pharmacy was inventoried and the remaining medicines were left for use in two Episcopal clinics, under the supervision of the Rev. Roberto Martinez. Various clinic supplies that will be used in Honduras again on future medical missions.

A complete list of diagnoses and patient population statistics is available upon request.

This year for the first-time dental care was provided to patients. This effort was led by Dr. Silvia Lopez from Puerto Cortes. In total 46 patients were seen and 66 teeth were extracted!

The vision clinic evaluated the vision of 233 patients, with 109 receiving prescription eyeglasses and 111 receiving readers and 174 receiving sunglasses. In previous years, the vision clinic saw around 240 patients, so this was a demonstration of the continued effectiveness of the clinic in reaching those needing eyeglasses. 213 Spanish New Testaments were given out to vision clinic patients to read with their new glasses. Also, for the second time, the vision clinic gave out 260 eyeglass holders made by the ECW women of St. Barnabas in Arizona.

714 tubes of toothpaste and flossers, donated by St. Stephen's Church in Phoenix, were distributed to patients and their families. Along with this distribution, a short training in proper tooth brushing and flossing was given. Instruction in the importance of hand washing and nail care was offered along with soap and nail clippers.

67 Sawyer water filters were delivered and distributed in nearby villages. Replacement filters for the filters already in use from previous years were also distributed. This distribution and training in the use and maintenance of the water filters took place in the church. This has been a very successful effort, as we have heard back from women in previous years who said that their children were much healthier after drinking clean water from their filters. The improvement in people's health and wellbeing from the small cost of the water filters is enormous.

A collection of 11 iconographs of saints was presented to Iglesia San Marcos for the walls of the church. These were created by artist Tony Conyers especially for the church.

Summary Thoughts:

Our team of 15 missionaries was outstanding. Their focus and hard work made for a successful and productive mission. Most of the team members were returning from previous mission trips and they worked together for our Lord towards the goal of serving God at this time in this place.

Once again, this mission experienced a great spirit of cooperation between the team and the local Honduran community. The priest of the congregation was always available to help insure that patients understood their diagnoses and use of their medications. They also were available to counsel and pray with patients in difficult situations. Women of the congregation served coffee each morning and afternoon. One morning they even cooked breakfast for the clinic staff. Local workers provided the set up and the clean up each day.

The coordination and cooperation with the Diocese of Honduras and Iglesia San Marcos were invaluable to the success of this year's mission. The preparation of the clinic site was completed before our arrival and we were able to store supplies in Honduras from the previous year. We were also able to order and purchase certain supplies in Honduras, instead of bringing them from the US. This made travel much easier for the team members.

This year's medical mission was very successful. Thanks be to God! Prayer teams at our home churches prayed for us both before and during our mission. The increase in the number of supporting churches was heartening. Prayers were offered for safety, good health and wisdom for each team member and our patients. Money and supplies like toothbrushes, toothpaste, nail clippers, water filters, eyeglass holders, Spanish new testaments and liturgical items were donated.

Based on our positive outcomes, we pray to increase our ability to respond to the general medical, vision and dental needs of small, rural communities in Honduras and to look at ways to ensure more continuity of care for the patients and their families that we treat.



Iglesia San Marcos parishioners welcome the team on Sunday morning



Student Interpreters from St. John's Episcopal School, Puerto Cortes



Patient Intake



The water filters



Teaching people how to brush their teeth



Fr. Roberto and the vestry of Iglesia San Marcos



Receiving glasses, eyeglass holder and Spanish New Testament in the vision clinic



Dr. Silvia working in the Dental Clinic



Dispensing medications in the pharmacy



We saw many children during the medical mission



The Mission Team