

Kearney – John F. Kennedy Catholic High School
Society for the Propagation of the Faith
2009 “Got Good News” Essay Contest, 2nd Place Winner

On June 16th, I, along with 8 other students and 5 chaperones, arrived in San Pedro Sula, Honduras each with one suitcase for ourselves and an additional one containing items that were to be given away to the people of Honduras. We met a couple of Notre Dame Sisters at the Centro Notre Dame in El Progreso, where we stayed the first night in Honduras and our last. In El Progreso, we visited an orphanage called Copprome where young boys and girls can stay. It was really my first interaction with Honduran children and it was amazing to see how happy all of them were.

They didn't have a care in the world and they all just wanted to have fun, like normal, healthy children. After staying in El Progreso, we traveled to Monte Verde, which is a very tiny village on the very top of a mountain about 2 hours by car from La Esperanza, the nearest city. We began our work to help build a library for the village since there was no way for the people in Monte Verde to receive books or other reading materials. At the same time, men from the village were busy helping finishing the church that they'd been working on for two years already. Our first day on the job, a terrible accident happened at the church and two men were injured badly and another man was killed. It was a very tragic day for a lot of people, but somehow I think it made the village grow stronger. Everyone came together that night and they had a service for the man that died.

His name was Arcadio and he left behind 10 children and his wife. People from all over came for the service and the funeral the next day and brought all sorts of food and money for the family. These people of Honduras have hardly anything to live on, and they were still able to give away some of their possessions for this family in their village. One person told us that they'd give their only day's meal to help the family of this man who helped to do so much for their community. It was amazing to see the strength that the family received from the people of Monte Verde. We continued to work on the church and many men helped us with the construction of this library. As we all had gloves and shovels to make the foundation and walls, these men only had their bare hands and feet to work with. Some walked many hours to come and help us with the construction of the library.

It was so inspiring to see these men work so hard to help us begin the formation of the library. We had come to help them, but instead, they were helping us, not only with the building of the library but also to give us a sense of who they really were. The people of Honduras are a more kind and generous people than we are in the United States. When we showed signs of needing help, they weren't afraid to lend a hand. Even though we weren't able to finish the library, I know that we had made a lasting impression on these people as they did us. I will never be the same from my experience in Honduras, and I am hoping to return some day very soon.