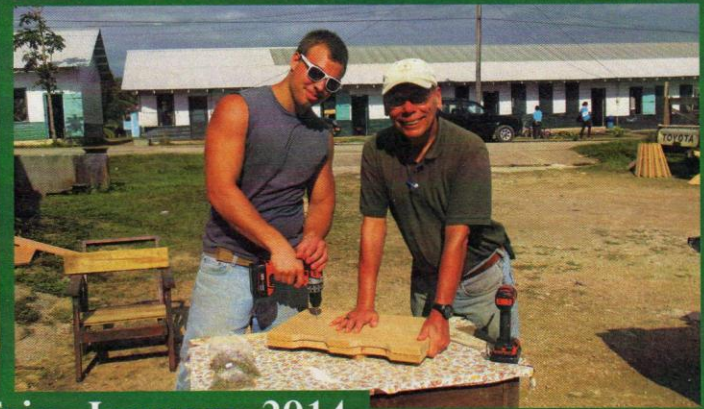
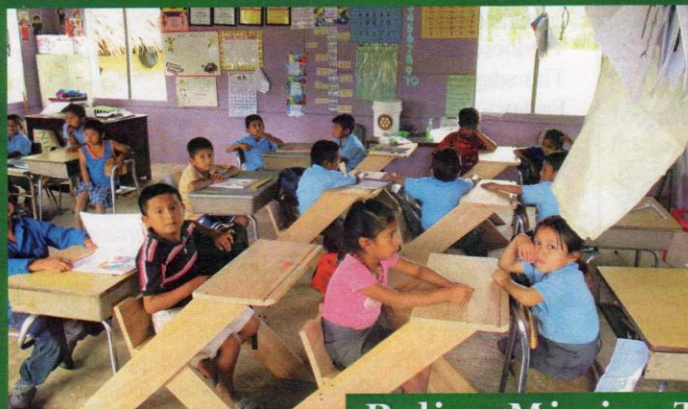
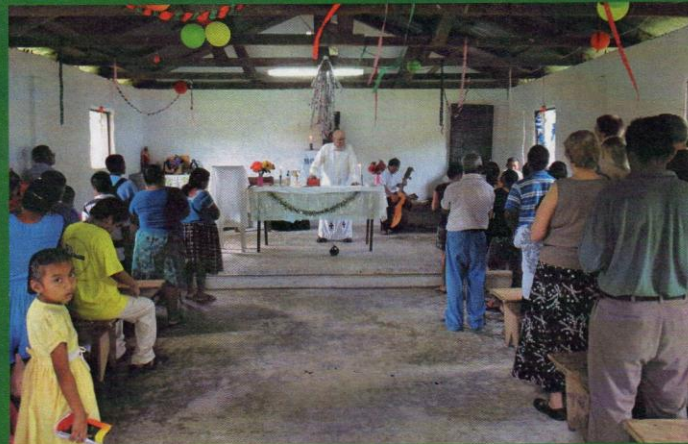
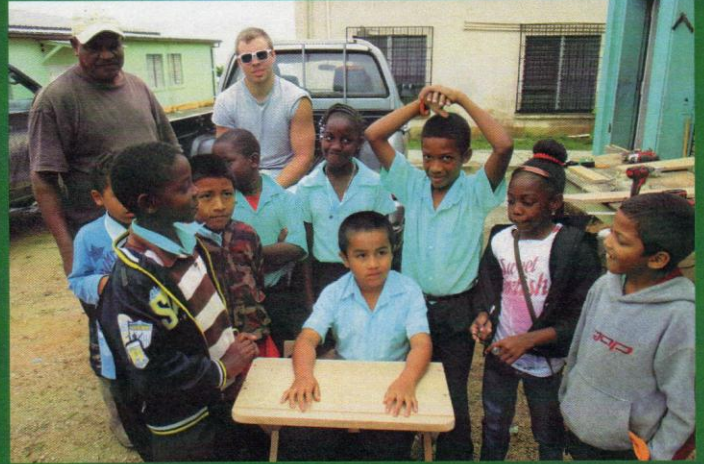
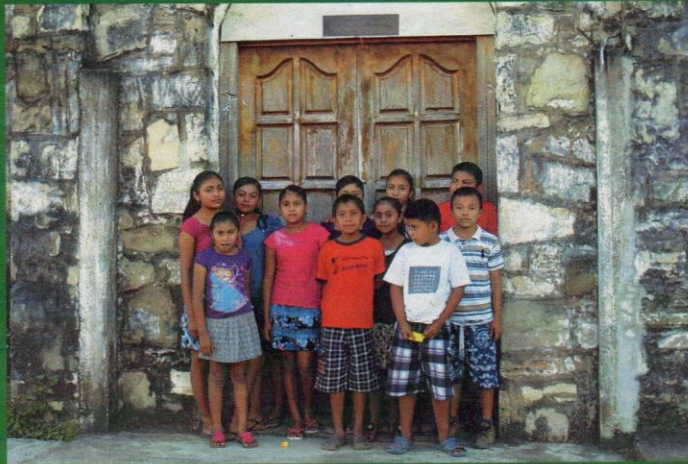


# ST. THERESA PARISH

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 23, 2014



Belize Mission Trip, January 2014



## BELIZE MISSION TRIP 2014

At a glance some may think that Belize is not a very appealing or prosperous country with its thatched-roof huts, for most a menu of beans, rice, and tortillas, poor sanitation conditions, polluted water, high unemployment (65% in the Toledo District), and many other challenges the Belizian people must face every day. Not a pretty picture!! If you go with Jesus in your heart, and seek his guidance, we found a purpose for which God has directed us, and that is to do what Jesus did—serve those in need. And then that not so pretty picture turns into the most meaningful and beautiful experience of a life time. An experience that cannot be easily explained unless experienced.

This mission trip was a very spiritual and rewarding experience because of the variety of projects we worked on and the interaction we had with the people. The first week we worked on the H.O.P.E. project, making and pouring concrete for a carport and entry ramps. This project is a Pallottine Sister's building that has been being built for a couple of years mainly because of the lack of funds. When finished it will be a center for the elderly who are brought in from the outer areas for an afternoon where they are checked medically, given an informative talk, and have fun singing songs and doing a craft project. We were fortunate to be able to be a part of this activity. Our group led the singing and craft project. They were kind of quiet and bashful at first, and as the afternoon went on they became more receptive to us, and when it's time to leave they didn't want to go. It was very rewarding watching them have fun, and to see their somber faces brighten with great big smiles. Our second big project was building desks for a school in San Lucas. We worked on building the desks at St. Peter Claver, and then took them to the children in San Lucas. Once we started assembling the desks, and they realized what we were making, they started removing their old desks from the classroom and carrying in the new ones. The joy on their faces was all we needed to make the day a beautiful day. Another great time was an afternoon spent at St. Benedicts School helping the teacher with 35 five year children. I was impressed with how respectful and well-behaved they were. What touched me the most was how faith-filled these little children were as they prayed before going home at the end of the day.

There is no easy road for the people in Belize yet we met many who are driven and determined to get an education so that they can help their families and their people. They are very poor, but very happy. I find it amazing when we first get to Belize everything seems a little over-whelming and think "where do we begin" but before you know it all starts to come together. We're working as a team and accomplishing what we set out to do. I truly believe the Holy Spirit is guiding us to where we need to be to serve those in need. After the 2 weeks and it's time for us to leave hopefully we will have given our friends in Belize a little more happiness.

*Linda Klingler*

Our physical goals were the construction of two handicapped ramps and a concrete carport pad at the Hope Center, and the construction and distribution of 25 student desks with hard work and great teamwork we accomplished those goals. We also spent time with the seniors sharing craft projects and exercises; prepare food packages for the poor, work with 35 five year olds. Beyond the physical things the more important things are the interaction with people. We learned a young man we had worked with last year had died at the age of 29, leaving a wife and 4 children. We became friends with those we work with learning about their lives and sharing ours. St Peter Claver had three priests this year, average age of 75, two young Jesuit novices who will become priests, and 2 Jesuit Volunteers, college graduates working in the church. I also became a friend of the youth minister a wonderful young man. It always makes you feel good when you see these people committed to serving our church together with many young people working for non governmental agencies trying to help the people. The Sister's are an inspiration to all with their hard work and dedication and this year we became much closer to many of them. There's a Pallottine Priest from Poland so we had daily mass at 6:30 AM.

God continues to enrich our lives by the people we met, those we worked with, the simplicity of everyday life, and the natural beauty. It truly is a humbling experience to see the simple lifestyles that produce so much faith and happiness. God teaches us in so many ways on these trips.

*Bob Anderson*

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## 2014 Mission Trip

(Also see back page)

There were four goals this year: to accomplish meaningful projects, work as a team, meet the locals and learn something about ourselves. All four happened.

By traveling to a third world country and having no service or internet connection, I was able to put my life on hold in order to build personal relationships while embracing the life adventures that Belize had to offer. To fully emerge oneself in a third world country and experience the poverty level from village to village is unlike anything I have ever witnessed. This mission trip was a very spiritual and rewarding experience because of the variety of projects we worked on and the interaction we had with the people. I truly believe the Holy Spirit is guiding us to where we need to be to serve those in need.

A few touching moments would be: the students in the village of San Lucas whisking away their old desks to replace them with the new ones we had just assembled, some of our team members playing soccer with the young boys and girls, the 20 or more seniors enjoying singing and doing crafts at their meeting and the most poignant—a family of 9 were given and taught to use a water purifier (installed on a 5 gallon bucket) and thus have clean water.

The spirituality and faith of the people, as evidenced by the Mass we attended in Blue Creek village, was very moving. We were welcomed by everyone in the church.

Another great time was an afternoon spent at St. Benedict's School helping the teacher with 35 five-year olds. I was impressed with how respectful and well-behaved they were. What touched me the most was how faith-filled these little children were as they prayed before going home at the end of the day.

We constructed concrete handicap ramps and a carport for the new Senior Center in Punta Gorda. After dinner we went around the room and shared our thoughts for the day. Comments were mostly people based, since we talked and worked with many local residents, school children, nuns, priests, catechists and Jesuit novices.

On the last day we had a pizza and pool party. It was 85 degrees.

It is a humbling experience to see the simple lifestyles that produce so much faith and happiness. God teaches us in many ways on these trips.

It is my genuine hope that individuals who are given the opportunity to attend a global mission trip will jump at the chance to escape the brutal Wisconsin winter. Join us in 2015!!!

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Pallottine Senior Center



Noon-time soccer game



Blue Creek Church

