

The Newsletter
Of

The Community
Of
St. Martin

*Apostles of
Charity*

The Breeze of St. Martin

Vol 2, Number 1
Ordinary Time

“Finally, there
was a gentle
Breeze...
Elijah,
Why are
you here?”
1 Kings
19:12b-13



To Serve the Poor

In the Tradition of

*San Martin de Tours—To Evangelize
San Martin De Porres—To Serve the
Poor
Martin Luther—To Take God’s Grace
to the Streets
Martin Luther King, Jr.—To Work for
Peace and Justice*



Community of St. Martin representatives go to Chile!

Santiago and Concepción Chile were the sites of EPES Second International School for Popular Education. Verónica Gómez and Rodrigo Rincón from Guadalajara were chosen by the Community of St. Martin for this training. The objectives for the school:

- Learn and apply methods for popular education in the field of community health.
- Learn how to organize community based health cooperatives.
- Work with local community organizations in doing outreach.
- Explore the role of the church in the struggle for the right for healthcare.
- Visit areas hit by the 2010 earthquake and talk with leaders involved in participatory reconstruction.
- Learn the EPES model—internationally recognized—for disaster response.

The intensive two week-long school went from January 4-14 and included 19 participants from 9

different countries. In addition to interactive classroom activities, students worked in neighborhoods and markets to learn techniques for doing healthcare out-reach and education in ways that are culturally appropriate, including low levels of formal education.

Back in Mexico, Verónica and Rodrigo will work with the Community of St. Martin in Polanco, a working class neighborhood, to develop a community based healthcare cooperative and do outreach in HIV prevention and healthcare rights.



Participants doing outreach in a local shantytown.

Community of St. Martin is found on the streets of a public market on Sundays.

In collaboration with Mesón de la Misericordia, the Community of St. Martin can be found in the streets of a popular market on Sundays doing healthcare outreach. Working with funds from donors, the Community of St. Martin has purchased a spot in a local flea market, known as “tianguis,” for doing outreach. This is the first booth to be used for healthcare out-

reach in the history of the “tianguis” in Polanco. Donors also help underwrite the salary of three outreach workers targeting women, youth, sex workers and drug users in an effort to encourage harm reduction and to encourage early testing for HIV.

This unique outreach effort is the first of its kind in Guadalajara and the Community of St. Martin is proud to have helped initiate this creative approach to saving lives and improving the quality of life for hundreds of people.

Support from the State of Jalisco in the provision of free condoms and materials has been appreciated. A special thanks to our donors in the USA and Europe for your support! Without you, we could not do it! **Thank you!!!**



Staff from Mesón de la Misericordia and the Community of St. Martin join forces to improve the quality of health for the vulnerable in Guadalajara.

Community worker Pedro Chavez joins community residents for “birria” in the popular Sunday morning flea market.



Taking God's Grace to the Streets is one of the principles guiding our pastoral work. Our goal is not to build an institution or a new agency. Agency people sit in their offices or their outreach tables and wait for people to come to them. Agency people believe they have answers for the problems people are facing and their agency will make a difference in the lives of the people they serve. Agency people become self-serving as their false charity is not transformational, but consumable. Agency people can be found in social service agencies, churches, political projects and non-profit organizations.

The Community of St. Martin sent two people, Veronica Gomez and Rodrigo Rincon, to Chile for a two week seminar on popular education, in the field of healthcare. EPES, a project with 30 years of neighborhood organizing and educating experience, received them and 17 others from 9 different countries. The goal: how not to be an agency person and how to become involved in a transformational way in the lives of the most vulnerable.

Participants worked with victims of the 2010 earthquake. They worked in markets doing healthcare education. They visited homes and talked with people. They saw murals, street theatre, flyers and art being used to create a healthy cultural at a popular level. They engaged people helping people solve problems and moving forward.

Karen Anderson, RN, MPH, founder of EPES and her team lead an amazing two week seminar in Santiago and Concepcion. Participants put in long days of observation, dialoging and getting into

the lives of those most vulnerable. They observed and learned from the EPES teams as they get out from behind the desk of their agency and go into the streets and homes of the people. Workshops are street theatre vignettes making pointed statements about health and prevention of HIV and other diseases. Flyers are interactive games, using artwork and characters that can be identified. Words are limited as reading skills are limited among the most vulnerable.

Participants were challenged to reflect on the realities they came from. How will their work be different upon their return? How will they integrate the vulnerable into the planning and implementation of their work? What criteria can be used to make sure work is transformational and not just false charity?



Veronica and Rodrigo are back in Guadalajara! Each are working to implement new ways for being in public market places with life-saving information. How can abandoned walls become beautiful murals? How can street theatre become a part of outreach efforts? How can drawings replace words? Instead of being an agency waiting for people to come or an agency making a referral to another agency, how can the Community of St. Martin enter the homes and lives of the vulnerable to provide transformational opportunities?

With your support, the Community of St. Martin is able to count on a permanent spot in a market place where people can be engaged. An apartment in a neighborhood becomes a safe place for rapid testing for HIV and conversation. Our workers are designing ways to bring God's Grace to the streets.

Theological Reflection

God's Word for the Living of These Times

Pastoral Work

God's Word Takes Shape in our World

Verónica Gómez and Rodrigo Rincón were given scholarship funds from EPES and the Community of St. Martin to attend the Second International School in Popular Education in Santiago and Concepción, Chile, January 4—14.

They learned the techniques for developing popular education methods in neighborhoods where reading and writing skills are low and needs are high. They learned how to do home visits, street outreach, analysis, use of cultural tools, i.e. street theatre, murals and dialogues, to enhance the quality of healthcare for the poor. Now, back in Mexico, the work begins! Thank you for your support!

La Comunidad de los Martines
In Chile as a Participant in
EPES' Second International School
In Popular Education
Dignity, Empowerment, Equality



19 Participants from 9 Countries and EPES staff in Santiago, Chile

EPES has more than 30 years of doing popular healthcare education in Chile. Working under a brutal dictatorship, during earthquakes and in situations of extreme poverty, EPES staff, lead by Karen Anderson RN, MPH, have earned the trust and love of the Chilean people and international recognition from the Harvard School of Public Health, to Holly Near to renown NGO representatives. Thank you EPES for your leadership and training for others! For more information about EPES and its wonderful work in Chile, see: www.epes.cl, www.actionforhealth.org



Interactive exercises taught leaders analysis and planning using images and languages that vulnerable populations understand. Veronica (L) and Rodrigo (C) diagram their community.

Following two weeks of hard work, graduation day brought smiles to the faces of Verónica (far left) and Rodrigo (far right). Colorful murals with healthcare messages adorn the site of graduation.



Thank you
For your
Support!

\$500 given to help give verify HIV status for 6 pregnant women
\$4,775 given in scholarship funds

4 Summer Spanish Class Sessions
Language and Cultural Immersion
May 14—June 16, June 8—July 9
July 8—August 15, August 12—September 14
Travel, Formal Language Training
Live in a Mexican Neighborhood
Travel
www.comunidaddesanmartin.org
For details

News Bleeps

Summer Spanish Sessions have been organized and announced. Check our website for dates and details or e-mail us for an application form.

A Fund Raising event was held in San Bernardino in the home of Dr. Stephen and Laurie Estes in San Bernardino. Funds will be used to support the Community's work with the physically impaired in Aguascalientes.

OSHIKI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND CONTINUES AND NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

Nathaniel Maldonado has begun his senior year at Wartburg College, Waverly, IA. A street artist from San Bernardino, with the OSHIKI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND he will now have a Bachelor's in Fine Arts. Teaching and community art are his passions and will be his way to serve youth struggling to grow in urban America. As we approach the 3 anniversary of +Jean's+ death and 1 anniversary of +Kaz+ death,

please remember them with a generous gift!

La Comunidad de los Martines is now a legal Asociacion Civil in Mexico! Now recognized by the Mexico government, not only does it have more space to function but also will be eligible for funding and agreements for services and supplies from local government offices.

Veronica Gomez has joined the Community's staff and will be developing our Popular Education programs. Focusing on our presence in Polanco, Veronica will target women and youth at risk. Veronica will be starting community based interactive workshops and will be joining the team for Sunday outreach in the popular marketplace.

Pedro Chavez has joined the Community's staff. Pedro is the Public Accountant for the Community and works as a community healthcare educator. With support from the State of Jalisco,

Pedro is doing HIV prevention work in the streets of Guadalajara, targeting sex workers and homeless youth who have come into the city looking for work and to study.

The Community operates on a shoestring budget.

Our donors now provide \$1,000 a month to cover all our costs!

Can you help us increase that to \$1,500 a month? Every donation helps and is appreciated!

You donations help provide scholarship funds, needed medications and blood tests, And staff support.



The Community of St. Martin

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**The Community of St. Martin
Is a recognized ministry in partnership with
The Ecumenical Catholic Church**
Your donations are tax-deductible

Support *Apostles of Charity* in their work!