



Notes from San Lucas Toliman

“My name is Minor, and this is my house.” After spending the first hour mixing and laying concrete for the floors of a new home with whom we believed to be two construction workers from the San Lucas Mission, one of the “workers” proudly informed us (in English) that he was the recipient of one of the homes we were building. Helga, a single mother for whom the second house was being built, provided a wonderful lunch for the building crew and STB workers, despite her limited resources.

The pride in which Minor spoke, and the gratitude that he and Helga expressed, exemplified what the Mission is all about. The work of the San Lucas Mission, long ago established by the late Fr. Greg Shaeffer, has always used a justice model of service: addressing the root causes of poverty, malnutrition and illiteracy. The projects of the mission uplift the people in the community by raising the education levels of its youth, providing dignified living in the construction of new homes, and providing a livable income for the local coffee producers (currently paying double the market rate to the members of the Mission cooperative) as well as for the nearly 100 employees of the Mission itself.

Thanks to the generosity of STB members, through waffle breakfasts, coffee sales and other donations, we were able to provide homes to two families, charity bags filled with rice, beans, soap and other daily essentials to 19 families, and furniture for three families. Besides work on the two homes, we helped to build stoves, move construction materials for a new school addition, and pick and sort coffee beans. One member of the group, a teacher, was able to assist in classrooms in the Mission school, and another helped the Mission cooks prepare a delicious meal of Chile Rellenos. Best of all, we had the opportunity to get to know so many of the local Mayans, in their homes, at the Mission Women’s Center, in their churches, and at the projects.

Those relationships are what Fr. Greg always stressed as the greatest gifts we both give and receive on our trips to San Lucas. If you would like to learn more about the San Lucas Mission, go to their website: sanlucasmision.org. To all who have given generously to the mission: ¡Muchas gracias!