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## Times and Tides E-Newsletter September 2018



### Random Goodness

She came holding a guitar in her hands. My guess is that she was ten or eleven years old. I'd never met her before and I did not know her name. My hands were splattered with paint from the roller I was holding, with which I'd been painting the ceiling. My neck and arms were sore from the job. Twelve others from St. Mary's were all together, painting different parts the chapel on the campus of Our Little Roses home for girls in Honduras. There was a lot of work to do and I was not at all sure at that moment that we would have the time to get it all done.

When this girl came into the chapel, I was not exactly sure what she wanted, but I took a chance in guessing it had something to do with the guitar. Her English was limited. My Spanish was probably even more so. Setting aside my strategic plan of how much ceiling I was going to get covered by a certain time, I set about to speak with her with our few overlapping words to see what we could figure it out together. What I figured out from her smile and nods, and what she figured out from my clunky questions, was that I could get out of a painting job – and she could get a guitar lesson. This was a symbiotic relationship! We could be friends!

Looking back on this moment from a few weeks in the future, I cherish it as one of the most lovely and meaningful memories of our time in Honduras. At first, I thought of it as a kind of random goodness. But the more I reflect on it, I don't think the goodness was as random as it might seem.

The word random seems to have links to mindlessness, with an absence of meaning. Randomness feels to be lacking in the virtues of intentionality, carefulness, compassion or courage. But I like its links to chance – as in taking a chance - especially taking a chance with the intention of something good.

While I may have taught her a few chords on the guitar. She was the real teacher to me that day – and today. For she showed me the beauty of taking a chance. Of asking a question, meeting someone new, doing something that seems scary, reaching out to a stranger, even asking for help – even just showing up. Her showing up that day, with courage, openness, hopefulness and trust was a gift that will last far beyond the time we shared in the unfinished chapel that day. The girl's name is Brigit. We pray for her (and all the girls at Our Little Roses) every week. As we remember her and her sisters in our hearts, may we be inspired by her example of leading us into "random" goodness.

Peace,

Jeff



### **Hola Amigos!**

Did you know that thirteen St. Mary's parishioners recently spent a week in Honduras? From August 5-12, we lived in community with over 60 girls who, through the ministry of Our Little Roses, have been rescued from abject poverty, abandonment, and abuse. This was St. Mary's fourth trip since 2010. For some adventurers it was their first visit, while others have been all four times.

Be sure to ask Jeff and Alden Lewis; Brita, Steve, Rebecca and Alice Bruemmer; Alex, Francesca and Madalena Taurke, Celeste Ventura, Don Fennell, Daniel Matsumoto and myself about our time with the girls. We will tell you all about painting the chapel in neapolitan colors, playing cards with the girls, learning a crazy Pikachu handshake game, dancing with the youngest, playing in the river, swimming in a refreshingly cool pool, hiking to a colonial town in the mountains, making gorgeous headbands, and how great the food was.

Next summer we have the opportunity to go back. That's when the magic really happens. We get to see the girls who will be one year older, some of them might have graduated high school, there might be new ones who steal our hearts, and our favorites will still be making up rules to card games as we play so that there is no possibility we can win! If you are interested in going on that trip, please contact me: Kirsten Matsumoto: 601-4132, [yoyomatsumoto@yahoo.com](mailto:yoyomatsumoto@yahoo.com) The dates are: July 28 - August 4, 2019.

Our Little Roses began as a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras in 1988. Founder and Executive Director Diana Frade saw a need to help girls she found begging on the streets and created a safe place where girls could grow up to become strong, educated Honduran women. I was fortunate enough to be there at that time, and as the first volunteer to work at the home, my duties included creating a healthy menu, making sure sheets were on the bunk beds, supervising homework, and taking the girls on outings. Many of the girls had not slept in a bed prior to coming to Our Little Roses, nor had they eaten food on a regular basis. When I started, there were three girls in the home. By the end of my stay two years later, there were 26.

Now it is 2018 and that means that Our Little Roses has survived earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, dramatic changes in government, and economic hardship. The ministry has built its own home and bilingual school where currently 69 Roses, ages 8 months to 26-year-old university students, are being raised with love and care. They also have a medical clinic and dental clinic, the latter run by Dr. Jency Maldonado, DDS, herself a graduate of Our Little Roses. It is truly amazing to see this ministry thrive. It started with a simple idea: Give girls a safe place to sleep, feed them, clothe them, educate them, and they will blossom into incredible women.

The relationship we have with the girls at Our Little Roses is truly unique. While we provide resources and companionship for a week, the girls give us love and memories that last a lifetime. Thanks be to God. Gracias a Dios!



Kirsten Matsumoto was honored for her 30-year commitment to Our Little Roses with a plaque that said:

**Gracias Kirsten for your deep care  
and commitment to the girls and staff of Our Little Roses  
30 years and growing**



## Reflections from Those Who Went to Honduras

The thing that always strikes me at Our Little Roses is how "normal" these girls are. Yes, their backgrounds are sad, painful, and sometimes horrible. But that does not define who they are now.

These kids are playful, mischievous, affectionate, smart, and curious. They look out for each other like siblings, they form cliques like any group of children do, and they thrive with love, food, shelter and education.

They rise to challenges, they are brave, and they fall down and get back up. If anything is different from kids in this country I have known, it is that there is less crying.

It is always a pleasure and an honor to visit and spend time in their world, and to "help" them by painting something on their property.

I will go back.

**Brita Bruemmer**

**Celeste Ventura** shares that since her first introduction to Our Little Roses, up to and including our latest visit, what comes to my mind and heart are the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu:

"...we are all caught up in a delicate network of interdependence, unable to celebrate fully our own heritage and place in the world, unable to realize our full potential as human beings, unless everyone else, everywhere else, can do the same."

*Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

### **Calling All Kids! (And their parents, grandparents and friends)**

Many thanks to our wonderful Toddler Room teacher, Melissa Rubio, who continues to provide a safe and enjoyable space for our kids ages 0-4. We are grateful that Melissa has agreed to stay on for another great year of Play-Doh, puzzles and snacks (the best part!) in our Toddler Room. Please stop by and say hello to Melissa next time you're over in Clay Hall.

For our kids ages 5-11, we will launch the new Sunday School year on **Homecoming Sunday, September 16th** with our "Godly Play Plus" program. We will continue to use the Godly Play program as the base curriculum for our Sunday School, but we are very excited to expand this year to include additional projects in a variety of areas, including art, music, drama, nature and mindfulness. If you have a special interest or gift that you would like to share with our youth, we want you! No teaching experience required and the time commitment can be as little as one Sunday a year. If you signed up last spring, watch for an email with more details. Newcomers and Oldtimers welcome!

Please contact Elizabeth McCorkle at 410.916.9576 or elizabethmccorkle@yahoo.com if you would like to be involved.

**Remember** to sign up to support St. Mary's at **AmazonSmile!**

On your *first visit* to AmazonSmile which is at [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com), please select **St. Mary's by-the-Sea** to receive donations from eligible purchases *before* you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation to our church. When you shop at [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com), you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience that you enjoy at Amazon.com. Please sign up today!

**Coming soon: The Leslie Garden Party!** The date is set for November 4th  
- More information coming soon.

## SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Thursday	6	12:00 noon	Guild Meeting	Guild Room
Friday	7	1:30 pm	Prayer Shawl Meeting	Guild Room
Saturday	8	5:00 pm	I-Help Women	Edwards Hall
Sunday	9	10:00 am	Choir Returns	Church
Sunday	9	after service	Acolyte Training	Church
Wednesday	12	6:00 pm	Stone Soup	Edwards Hall
Saturday	15	6:00 pm	Little Mermaid	Forest Theater
Monday	17	7:00 pm	Vestry	Guild Room
Saturday	22	6:00 pm	I-Help Men	Edwards Hall
Wednesday	26	7:00 pm	Celtic Concert	Edwards Hall
			Fall Series Opener featuring MAC	

*\*Celtoid Kids continues every Tuesday: Beginners 4pm-5pm; Advanced 5pm-6pm*



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