

INTERNATIONAL PROJECT UPDATE

PROJECT 9008



Roofs for the Poor

— Guatemala and El Salvador —



Prepared for

**Mr. Mitchell Hentkowski
and Metal Panels Inc.**

September 2018



Special Thank You!

Cross Catholic Outreach Gratefully Acknowledges

**Mr. Mitchell Hentkowski
and Metal Panels Inc.**

for your generous provision of roofing supplies
to give safe shelter to the poor

— Guatemala and El Salvador —



Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2



Cross Catholic Outreach staff and partners pray with volcano survivor Julio Morazan.

You sheltered the needy

Mitch, your generous donation of hundreds of zinc laminate sheets has been a godsend! Roofing materials are in high demand in the countries where we serve — places where the poor often fashion their makeshift homes out of sticks, mud, tarp and whatever they can scrape together — so your exceptional product is making a huge impact. Through its availability, you have enhanced our plans to provide simple, durable, cost-effective and culturally appropriate solutions for families in desperate need of safe, secure shelter.

The fact that your donation came at a critical time was a double blessing. While the majority of the zinc sheets went to development efforts in El Salvador, a portion was rushed to Guatemala for families in immediate need of shelter after a volcanic eruption destroyed entire communities. It seemed like an answer to prayer and it allowed us to respond more quickly to that unexpected housing crisis.

Thank you for providing a glimmer of hope during that unimaginable tragedy.

In the following pages, you can read about how your generosity has impacted the needy in both countries. You will see why we value your partnership so much and why we are so thankful to the Lord for filling your heart with compassion for the poor. Your impact has been tremendous!



Guatemala

Grief overflowing

On June 3, Guatemala's Fuego volcano erupted, taking nearby villages by complete surprise. As it spewed rapidly spreading columns of ash and pyroclastic flow, families ran in fear — and most fell before they could escape.

We may never know the full extent of the devastation (the current official death toll is in the low hundreds, even though the real number might easily be in the thousands), but what we do know is the despair in the eyes of the shell-shocked survivors we met in the aftermath.

One of those survivors, Jamie Varias, lost 12 family members under the flood of scalding ash while he was away at work. Every morning since then, he's been returning to his village in search of their bodies. The day we spoke to Jamie, he'd just recovered his 2-year-old daughter and placed her body in a plastic bin. He told us, "I pray to God to give me back my daughters and my wife. It doesn't matter if they are dead or alive, but I ask him to please give them back to me."

While we could not give Jamie what he desperately wanted — his family back, alive and safe — we were determined to help those who had survived this horrific catastrophe rebuild their shattered lives. Thanks to you, we are succeeding!

A long-term solution

During our visits with survivors, we learned about the urgent need for housing. Many families are still sleeping in overcrowded and unsanitary emergency shelters, and the temporary multifamily houses being built by the Guatemalan government are far too tiny.

In response to this need, Cross Catholic Outreach has partnered with a number of organizations and local leaders to provide the **very first permanent houses** for displaced survivors. The plan is to build 200 sturdy new homes on a donated plot of land, "New Jerusalem," which is less vulnerable to volcanic activity. The work has already begun, and we are confident it will be completed within the next several months, *thanks in part to your generous provision of enough materials to construct 100 roofs for those urgently needed homes.*



Cross Catholic Outreach President Jim Cavnar (right) meets with Julio and his family.



Housing beneficiary: **Julio Morazan**

Julio escaped the volcanic eruption just in the nick of time. Ash engulfed his village as he, his wife and their two young daughters ran for their lives. From there, they took shelter in an overcrowded Catholic church, where they stayed for two months. They then moved into a temporary government shelter, not knowing how or where they might even begin to recover what they'd lost.

As Julio accompanied us through the ashes that entombed his rural village and most of its inhabitants, he looked on at the desolate coffee bean fields and wept.

"It was horrible. My village is gone. My entire life is gone," he said. "In reality, we have nothing. We have nothing. We have nothing."

We were with Julio in the ruins when excavators announced they'd found another body. That body turned out to be Julio's aunt, who he'd hoped was just in a shelter somewhere. Forty family members gone. Another confirmed dead. We cried with him and prayed. If any family desperately needed some good news, this family did.

That good news came two months later when a Guatemalan priest, Father Manuel Abac, announced to Julio and his wife, Micel, that we'd selected them to receive one of the 200 houses. At first, the young couple showed no reaction. We can only imagine the storm of conflicted emotions that swirled beneath their vacant exteriors as they tried to absorb the news. But after a couple minutes, tears began to run down Julio's face.

"I do not have words to thank you enough, but I know that the Lord will reward you," Julio said. "I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I honestly can't thank you enough."

After showing them the house, we treated the family to a trip to the store to gather household items such as kitchenware and cleaning supplies, since all their previous possessions were destroyed. Later that week, the furniture arrived, and we made sure it was carefully arranged to transform the empty structure into a comfortable and attractive home. Not only is this house the perfect solution to their need, but it is actually a bigger, nicer house than the one that was destroyed!



Julio and his family are introduced to their new home.



Julio's New Home



Your donated materials provided a sturdy roof for Julio's new house.



The family also received a sanitary sink/washbasin and a modern toilet.

New furniture makes their new house truly feel like home.



(Left to Right) Guatemalan Father Manuel, local ministry partner Jorge Gramajo, Cross Catholic Outreach staff member Helga Buck, the Morazan family, Cross Catholic President Jim Cavnar.



El Salvador

In El Salvador, your shipments of zinc laminate sheets provided roofs for 755 houses, a school, a medical clinic and three churches. These shipments represent nearly \$318,000 in value! But more importantly, they represent thousands of lives touched by your generosity.

The roofing materials were distributed through our local ministry partner, Friendly Hand Foundation, with which we've been working since 2011. We have a great relationship with this organization and its director, Jose Marrochi, whose background in El Salvador's immigration department makes him a valuable resource for moving aid into the country.

Housing beneficiary: the Martinez family

The Martinez family desperately needed help after their roof was destroyed by saltpeter. The chemical compound turned the sheet metal to rust, allowing rain to pour into the house during frequent torrential storms and causing the youngest daughter to suffer severe respiratory problems. During the heaviest storms, water was everywhere, and it was impossible to keep their possessions dry.

Thankfully, Friendly Hand Foundation learned of the Martinez family's situation and was able to provide them with a durable zinc roof from Cross Catholic Outreach. Zinc roofing sheets are a limited resource in El Salvador, so you can imagine the excitement that must have been felt when this gift was provided, not only for the Martinez family, but also for many of their neighbors.

The Martinez family said this was the first time any organization had come and helped them, and that the lack of local jobs has made their poverty especially burdensome. They are so grateful for this act of Christlike compassion, and they send many blessings to all who played a part in meeting their need for safe, secure shelter.



The Martinez family is grateful for the sturdy new roof you provided!



Working to change lives in El Salvador

BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER





Roofing materials shipped

between August 2017 and July 2018

COUNTRY	COMMUNITY	PROVIDED FOR
Guatemala	“New Jerusalem” settlement	100 houses
El Salvador	Los Angeles, San Julian	375 houses
El Salvador	Agua Escondida	10 houses
El Salvador	Belen Guija	1 church
El Salvador	Los Planes	80 houses
El Salvador	La Palma	1 clinic
El Salvador	El Hicaco, San Juan del Gozo	40 houses
El Salvador	San Jose Villanueva	1 church
El Salvador	San Juan del Gozo	1 school
El Salvador	Valle de Oro	15 houses
El Salvador	Talnique	35 houses
El Salvador	Divina	25 houses
El Salvador	La Tekera	25 houses
El Salvador	Las Hojas	50 houses, 1 church
El Salvador	Casablanca	25 houses
El Salvador	Fortuna	25 houses
El Salvador	La Camadula	25 houses
El Salvador	El Bebedero	25 houses

Each Guatemalan “New Jerusalem” house includes:

- Concrete walls and foundation
- 28 roofing sheets (18 big and 10 small)
- Earthquake-resistant construction
- Two bedrooms, one living room and propane gas kitchen
- One sink and toilet
- Door and window sealant
- Furniture
- Potential to add a second floor

Your gift has blessed thousands of lives!



God Bless You!

Thank you, Mitch, for the crucial role you've played in our efforts to shelter the poor and needy in Jesus' name! Your generous gift represents the selflessness Jesus called his disciples to when he said in Matthew 25,

"I was hungry and you gave me food... I was a stranger and you welcomed me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

At Cross Catholic Outreach, we consider this the lifeblood of Catholic social teaching. You expressed it too when you reached out to touch so many lives, impacting multiple projects with your gift! Men, women and children who had no safe place to lay their heads now have sturdy, weather-resistant homes to call their own. Their dignity has been restored, and their hearts have been touched by this outpouring of self-sacrificial love.

Please continue to remember the poor in your prayers — especially the volcano survivors as they struggle through the ongoing recovery process. May the compassion you have shown them be a model and inspiration to others to do likewise, and may you never grow weary of lifting up the downtrodden and rescuing the needy.

Remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:3