



Benilde-St. Margaret's

A Catholic, college-preparatory school, grades 7-12

Red Knights: Planting Seeds of Change

July 9 – July 17, 2019

The God's Child Project: Antigua, Guatemala

"This is what we are about: We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise."

-Archbishop Romero

service learning immersion

- work with families to build a home, kitchen and bunk beds by hand (ratio ~9 students/BSM chaperone)
- donations collections and packing (Treasure Hunt & locker cleaning)
- stay with middle-class families in Antigua (minimum two students per family)

cultural excursions

- Antigua – walking tour of historic colonial city with a bilingual guide
- Iximche – tour of Mayan ruins with a bilingual guide
- Lake Atitlán – scenic boat ride across a dormant volcanic lake
- Chichicastenango – handicrafts market

paperwork due Tuesday, January 22 to Sr. MB by 9:00 AM in room 139

- written application and signed BSM permission slip

paperwork due Friday, March 1 to Sr. MB by 3:00 PM in room 139

- passport copy valid through December 31, 2019
- additional BSM paperwork and copies of both sides of insurance cards

BSM eligibility requirements

- open to students currently in grades 9-11
- good academic and behavioral standing
- current tuition account

cost & vaccinations

- \$2,900 billed through tuition
 - o \$1,100 nonrefundable deposit in February and \$600 in March, April and May
- includes transportation, food, lodging, fees, building materials, and excursions
- students provide additional spending money for food in airports, souvenirs, snacks
- Although no vaccinations are required to enter Guatemala, we recommend you consult with your doctor and have the following vaccinations or boosters before going to Guatemala:
Tetanus Toxoid or DT (a combination of tetanus and diphtheria) & Hepatitis A and B Vaccines

Chaperones

- Matt McMerty-Brummer and Megan Hansen

Parent meeting

- Thursday, January 10 at 7:00 PM in the BSM library

With a wealth of history, culture and natural beauty, Guatemala possesses many riches. The Mayan civilization flourished for thousands of years before the arrival of the Europeans, and intricate weavings, traditional dress, native languages, ancient pyramids and unique religious ceremonies all stand witness to the historical and cultural wealth of this nation. Lush rain forests, pristine cascading waterfalls, rugged mountain ranges and majestic smoky volcanoes paint the canvas of the Guatemalan landscape.

Yet within all of this beauty, many people live in poverty and struggle to provide for themselves and their families. According to The God's Child Project, Guatemala's annual per capita income is about \$1,000USD. This figure can hide the difficulties faced by families living in extreme poverty, however, as a rural farmer may earn less than \$100USD a year. Unemployment is estimated at 20% nationwide and underemployment is as high as 65%. In the countryside, the rural poor often live in one-room shacks made from cane or corn stalks lashed vertically together, while other families make their homes with adobe mud bricks. In both cases, the homes have hard-packed dirt floors and roofs covered with palm branches or pieces of scrap material.

What is our role in this? What does our Catholic faith call us to do? Join us on our journey to Guatemala to deepen your relationship with others, yourself and God. Immerse yourself in the culture and practice your language skills as we live with host families in Antigua and work with families in the surrounding villages to build homes, outdoor kitchens and bunk beds.

Thank you for your openness to use your hands and your heart to serve and love. We are so blessed to travel with you and pursue our common mission-- to love and serve our God and to answer His call to love and serve each other. Over our nine days you will stretch, grow, love and be loved in ways that today you cannot yet imagine.

We look forward to accompanying you on our journey to Guatemala. It is our hope that this trip will be a fruitful experience and that each of you will grow closer to God by doing God's work. Be flexible, open-minded and prepare your heart, mind, body and soul for the adventure of faith, service and love upon which you are about to embark.

Itinerary Draft 2019

Tuesday, July 9 – arrive and meet host families

Wednesday, July 10 – orientation and walking tour of Antigua

Thursday, July 11 – construction begins

Friday, July 12 – construction continues

Saturday, July 13 – Iximché Mayan ruins and Lake Atitlán

Sunday, July 14 – Mass and Chichicastenango market

Monday, July 15 – construction continues

Tuesday, July 16 – construction finishes

Wednesday, July 17 – return home

“We have not had the same past, you and ourselves, but we shall have the same future.
The era of separate destinies has run its course.”

- Cheikh Hamidou Kane