



December 7, 2021 Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana

Recently our parish organized an event wherein 200 parishioners in general and another 100 people working with the social outreach effort entered the neighborhoods around our parish chapels visiting each household. The people were asked what needs they have and how we might be of help. If they were Catholic, they were asked if they



would like to arrange for the sacraments. If they had a previous bad experience with the Church, we apologized. We would let them know they are welcome at the Church. If they were not Catholic, with respect, we offered our services advising them of our scholarship, food basket, psychology, and other programs available to them.



At first our volunteers were excited about being missionaries in their own land and had the expectation that we were going to be evangelizing with the hope of conversion. But the focus was just on helping people and visiting. Many people were interested to hear about the programs the Church offers. It was a relief to learn that most people are not mad at the Church nor God. Some conveyed that they just didn't think anyone cared if they went to Church or not.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate always remind us that the Eucharistic is the centrality of the Church and our volunteers seem to know, love, and understand that. But as St. Eugenio, the founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate taught...first treat people as



humans, then Christians, then Saints. First address their hunger and other needs, then after, their spiritual needs.

Carlos and Antonia, married 57 years and both 74 years old, were two people we



met when our parish did its door-to-door visits. Sister Erica's small team knocked on their door and engaged them. Sister is of the Missionary of the Sacred Sacrament and Mary Immaculate order and is newly assigned to our parish, where her order provides many services.

Carlos relayed that they have several health issues, including diabetes and hypertension. He says he has 5 disks in his back which are bad, asthma, high cholesterol, and needs a pacemaker. His wife lost a leg 10 years ago and has end-stage kidney problems. He explained they do have children in the area, but they do not visit very often.

They live on only \$100 a month from retirement income, but they do have some health insurance. The costs of utilities, medications, food, and transportation are very challenging for them. He says he fishes in the government reservoir using just a line and a can for a float but is able to catch and sell catfish occasionally.

Carlos does not want to have the pacemaker installed because he feels he needs to stay strong and provide for his wife. He says that maybe when she is feeling stronger, he can have it done. The team with Sister Erica tried to explain that he could do a better job of helping after he got the pacemaker. But he felt strongly that he could not do that now.

In the end, it was arranged that our medical team would visit them next. They relayed that despite all their challenges of health, age, and income, life has been great since they found each other. They said that just having someone visit was a nice blessing.

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Our featured student is Gamez Flores Nidya Lizeth (donor Chris Goodman), who is studying to be a lawyer. Working with our Oblates Without Borders program, she received an award from her university about the work with the migrants.