

When St. Tom's sends a delegation to our Sister Parish, one of the things we do is visit the homes of some of the students in our program. It's a time to step into their lives and their reality, learn a bit about them and meet their families. One of the students that we visited in November 2019 was Xiomara. She lives along the abandoned train track with her family that includes her mother, brother, sister and brother in law and their two children. Her father worked for a security company and was killed while doing his job. Her mother makes tortillas by hand (cooks the corn, mills it to make the dough, and then makes them for both lunches and dinners) to sustain the family. Her brother in law runs a small bakery from their house. Xiomara is 25 and is starting her 8th semester of the University studying International Relations. In her spare time, she used to make quesadillas (very rich sweet bread) to sell to help with her University expenses, but now that she is in the upper years of her College program, she hasn't had time to do that in over a year. Even though she didn't know us- she knew we were from St. Tom's so she spent her morning making us a large pan of quesadilla and served us with beverages when we visited her home. She excitedly introduced us to her family, her brother in law demonstrated another sweet bread he was making and she told us all about her studies and what she enjoyed doing. Then she insisted that we take the rest of the quesadilla back with us. These kids have so little in the way of material things, but they have so much gratitude to St. Tom's and our support of their education - because they have A LOT of hope, dedication and effort, big plans for what they aspire their future to look like and couldn't make it happen without our help.



Please consider helping students with big dreams to make their dreams come true. An education is something that no one can ever take away from you and it is the key to move people out of poverty.

Xiomara (pictured) portioning out the quesadilla for us to try, and then take with us

St. Tom's relationship with Madre has extended over 30 years.

Our friendship and our scholarship program have blessed the Salvadorans and us.

If you would like to be a partner in this scholarship program complete the form on the inside of the brochure or call Michele at the parish office, 269-381-8917, ext. 273 or email michele@sttomskazoo.org.

Correspondence to:

Salvadoran Scholarship Program - c/o St. Thomas More Catholic Student Parish
421 Monroe Street - Kalamazoo, MI 49006

2020 SALVADORAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

St. Thomas More Catholic Student Parish
and
María, Madre de los Pobres ~ San Salvador



2019 Salvadoran Scholarship Student Graduates

University Students (pictured top) and High School Students (pictured below) who were able to attend the party.



AYUDA ESCOLAR SALVADORAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2020

María, Madre de los Pobres (Mary, Mother of the Poor) is St. Tom's sister parish in San Salvador, the capital city of El Salvador. St. Tom's has sponsored a scholarship program for high school and college students for many years. More students are realizing that education is essential for their future growth and the development of their country, and there is a need for this program now more than ever. You can be part of this great program in one of three ways.

Plan A allows you to **assist a Salvadoran student with their education while building a relationship with them.** Students look forward to hearing from their sponsors and are very grateful for the financial assistance. If you choose Plan A, you will soon be informed of your student's name. There will be announcements in the bulletin when someone is going to El Salvador who can deliver correspondence, so that you know when to write. Letters may be mailed to St. Tom's, dropped off at church or parish office, or e-mailed to sttoms@sttomskazoo.org. Your letters will be translated for delivery to your student. The students really appreciate receiving a picture and a brief message from their sponsors.

Plan B contributes to the expenses associated with education, but there is **no communication** between donors and the students.

Donations to Plan A and B do not go directly to a student, but rather to a general fund that is administered by the pastor and a coordinating team at María Madre. The contributions are distributed by that committee per their budget and as necessary on a case by case basis. In return, students are required to contribute service as a tutor, catechist, librarian, medical assistant, or participate in parish-sponsored or community activities such as choir, theater, and youth groups. Education is understood to be a gift for the entire community and not just for personal advancement.

Gifts are tax-deductible as a donation to St. Thomas More Catholic Student Parish.

Plan C allows participants to build and maintain a relationship with a Salvadoran student while they are active in the program. **No financial commitment** is expected for this option. Plan A and Plan B participants meet the program's financial goals, while Plan C will help us meet our goals for solidarity with all the Salvadoran Scholarship students at our Sister Parish.

Letters to students can be translated and delivered by the parish office. Reminders will be sent in parish bulletins, newsletters and on the St. Tom's Sister Parish website www.sttomskazoo.org. Select the "Ministries" tab and "Sister Parish" link for more details.

2020 AGREEMENT FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE () _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PLAN A

I commit myself to be a friend and carry on a correspondence with a student at our sister parish and assist with the expenses of his/her education. Indicate your preferences below, and we will do our best to match your request.

_____ MALE _____ FEMALE

_____ GRADES 10-12..... \$360.00/year (\$30/month)
(average cost per student is \$445.00)

_____ UNIVERSITY..... \$660.00/year (\$55/month)
(average cost per student is \$950.00)

You may pay monthly, quarterly, or a one time payment.

_____ I will translate my own letters or arrange for my own translator.

_____ I would like to sponsor the same student that I sponsored last year, **if that student is still in the program.**

PLAN B

I wish to make a contribution of \$_____ at this time to assist with educational expenses at our sister parish.

I am pledging a monthly contribution of \$_____ to assist with educational expenses at our sister parish.

PLAN C

I commit myself to be a friend and carry on correspondence with a sister parish student. I understand that no monetary contribution is expected and that the student's scholarship is funded by Plan A/B contributions. Plan C sponsors and scholarship students will be assigned based on availability/funding of students. My student preference is:

_____ Male _____ Female _____ Grade 10-12 _____ University

Please make checks payable to:

ST. THOMAS MORE SALVADORAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

For electronic giving please contact the parish office at 269-381-8917
or visit our website at

www.sttomskazoo.org and click on Stewardship/Electronic Giving.

(No payment reminders are sent by St. Tom's.)