



Did you know?



Take a Google maps tour of our parish

When I was a kid my brothers and I collected stamps from countries around the world and placed them in albums ordered alphabetically A to Z from Aden to Zanzibar...today it would be Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Each country was highlighted with a picture of their flag, a summary of basic information, and pictures showing where to place the stamps. Now and then we would count to see who had the most stamps from each country (my oldest brother always won), but before counting, we would read that country's summary and find it on a world map, imagining what it would be like to visit there someday.

If you've ever looked at maps that way, perhaps studied foreign countries in school, and "traveled" there in your imagination, I invite you to come visit us in Venezuela. Unfortunately, even if you had time, money and a passport, it would be super-difficult for you to come in person. With bad relations between the two countries, the United States shut down their embassy here in mid-2019 and Venezuela followed suit, shutting theirs down in the US. As a result, to get into Venezuela you would have to go to some other country where they have an embassy, apply for the required visa, and wait however long it would take.

Nevertheless, with help from the internet let's get you started. On your computer you pull up the site, zoom out until you see the northern part of South America. Notice how most of that continent is directly to the east of the United States. People often assume South America is directly south. Being farther to the east, we are two hours ahead of Minnesota standard time. Venezuela is a bit smaller than Texas and New Mexico put together. The only city showing on your map so far is Caracas, the capital. Move Venezuela to the middle of the screen and zoom in two more clicks. Note how few roads there are to the east and south of our city. Much of this country is comprised of dense forests, mountains and rivers with limited access on rugged trails,



you can visit us in your imagination. So, do a search for **maps.google.com**. When you can see a map all the way from Minnesota to the middle of your screen and zoom in two clicks. should appear in the eastern part of the continent. Note how few roads in two more clicks. Note how few roads country is comprised of dense forests, waterways and small aircraft.

Zoom in several clicks until the names of neighborhoods appear on your screen. Our parish lies along the east or right side of the Caroni River before it flows into the Orinoco. The neighborhoods labeled which make up our parish are Barrio La Viuda, Dalla Costa Los Sabanales, and Guaiparo. Now would be a good time to switch over to the satellite image. Note the color of the two rivers where the cool, clean waters of the Caroni flow into the muddy waters of the Orinoco. Guess which river people prefer for swimming and fishing.

appear on your screen. Our parish lies flows into the Orinoco. The neighborhoods La Laguna, Angosturita, La Antena, UD-121, a good time to switch over to the satellite image.

Now put the neighborhood of Guaiparo at the center of your screen and zoom in. A bit below the center you should be able to find our church "Iglesia Jesucristo Resucitado" next door to the public grade school "Nuevo Mundo". The regional public hospital is at the top of Guaiparo. A bit to the right and down from the hospital you should be able to see an orange marker for a store "Inversiones Antonio Aguilera". Put that at the center of your screen and zoom in until you can see a black vehicle parked on the street. That's actually one of our pick-up trucks right in front of our house. Look for a whiter "L" shaped roof wrapped around a gray rectangle. My room where I am typing this right now is in the back of the house. I can't stick my hand out and wave goodbye, but I do thank you for visiting us. As long as you have the satellite image, take a look around our city and surrounding area before you leave. You're always welcome here at our archdiocesan mission.

Points to ponder

After taking the Google tour, what were your impressions about Venezuela and our city?
What places around the world that you have studied or looked at on maps would you like to visit?

The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis has staffed and supported parishes in the diocese of Ciudad Guayana in Venezuela since 1970. These "Did you know?" papers are designed to give you a better understanding of life in Venezuela and to strengthen connections between the parishes of the Archdiocese and their archdiocesan mission during our 50th anniversary year. Please direct any comments or suggestions for future papers to Fr. Denny Dempsey at ddempsey@churchofst dominic.org or 651-368-7324.