

Make a Difference in Peru!



Summary

Wealth is distributed unevenly in the world with 20% of people living on less than \$1 per day, not enough for “daily bread.” They are caught in a poverty trap from which they cannot escape. God, through the Church and Bible, calls those with more resources to share with those with less. Those of us with more resources can make a difference. One way of doing this is to adopt a family in Peru and/or to go there on a mission. There is an easy way to do both.

Problem: uneven distribution of world wealth

- The richest 20% of the world controls 86% of the world GDP (Gross Domestic Product is the total value of all goods and services)
- The other 80% controls only 14% of the GDP
- 1.3 billion people (20% of humanity) live in “absolute poverty,” surviving on less than \$1 per day; they do not have an adequate diet or other necessities
- 3 billion people (half of the population) live on less than \$2 per day

The poor are in a poverty trap!

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Two Homebound Sisters after Receiving Communion

sick and being weak. People are thus able to cultivate less and work less, and as a result, they have less money to buy food or can produce less food, and so are hungry. They have less money for medical treatment, and so are more likely to be sick and weak.

Where do I fit in?

The Option for the Poor, in Catholic Social Teaching, tells us that the moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members.

Pope John Paul II wrote that “Stronger nations must offer weaker ones opportunities for taking their place in international life.”



Missionaries with Parish Staff

But, why me?

A survey of Scriptures shows that God frequently casts down the wealthy and powerful in two specific situations: (1) when they become wealthy by oppressing the poor; or (2) when they fail to share with the needy. It is only when we take our own sinful preoccupation with the successful and wealthy as natural and normative that God’s equal concern for all looks like a bias for the poor.

Matthew 25: 35-36

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.

So, what can I do?

Choose to do something, rather than nothing at all. Below are some options.

Adopt a Family through the Family-to-Family Program

Families in the U.S.A. have adopted over 800 Peruvian families and provide them with monthly aid of \$25.



Monthly Food Package

The Santísimo Sacramento parish staff uses 100% of the money to provide the families with basic needs such as rice, vegetable stew, milk, soap, tooth paste, etc.

The aid is not limited to a narrow relationship of economic things; a personal relationship is established between the American and Peruvian families by the exchange of letters, photographs, etc.

Three to four times per year, an ocean-going container is sent from the U.S.A. containing donated items such as clothes, shoes, medical implements, chairs, useful school materials, toys, etc., as well as articles originating from the American families for their Peruvian families.

Go on a mission trip to Piura

For eight years parish groups, individuals, and families have gone to Santísimo Sacramento to share in the daily work for the poor and to also experience the heroic faith of the people there. Everyday there is something valuable to do for someone who has very basic needs.

Sixty-three percent of Piuranos live in poverty and twenty-two percent live in extreme poverty (lacking their daily bread).



Constructing a House

It is not necessary that material resources be brought to do the work, since funding for works already exists.

The large parish staff is skilled in carpentry, social work, brick laying, etc. and, aided by pastoral workers through-

out the parish, enable visitors to do the work and significantly contribute to the well being of the most needy.

The parish provides lodging in a 13-bedroom facility capable of sleeping over 40 people. There is also a village retreat house

that has 100 beds. To defray the cost of water, gas, and electricity, a \$10 per week donation is suggested.

Parish groups normally bring money raised for building homes, chapels, etc., but that is not necessary for visiting families and individuals.

Here are some things to do in Piura

- Pray: there are daily prayer groups in the chapels, daily Eucharist with the people, weddings, baptisms, and eucharistic adoration
- Build a home, chapel, school room
- Deliver food packages, beds and blankets, clothing
- Gather children for activities and crafts, families for a picnic
- Heal while working with the parish health team, a medical or eye mission, speech therapy, wellness education
- Visit the elderly, the orphanage, your adopted family, the sick, families still unknown
- Play at fiestas, traditional dances, soccer, volleyball
- Teach English to the parish English group, at a local school, or teach other useful skills
- Help the parish lawyer, or at the drug rehab program,
- Invite youth to the movies, a group to the ocean
- Serve at the breakfast kitchens, or through projects yet to be discovered



Delivering a Food Package

The parish is spread out and has many neighborhoods and villages, which are visited daily. The spirit of the mission groups is to share in the work and pray with the people.

Of the perhaps 1,000 missionaries who have gone to the parish, no one has returned to the U.S.A. with malaria or any problems acquired there. Diarrhea is not common; it occurs in some and not in others.

Flying to Piura from Lima is recommended. There is a morning and an evening flight each day. Most groups come for one or two weeks. Individuals come for months and rent an apartment. Parish groups visit Piura June through August. Most of the parish staff is either away or on vacation from mid-August to mid-September.

Experience the face of Christ in the many people you will meet.

Contact DeaconLee@cox.net or 405-348-9461

Visit the parish web page:

[http://www.saintmonicaparish.com/
page29/page35/page35.html](http://www.saintmonicaparish.com/page29/page35/page35.html)