

El Salvador Sister Parish Delegation ORIENTATION

1. The purpose of our delegation is accompaniment. That means we want to serve.
2. The trip often turns out to be a personal spiritual experience. You are expected to attend:
 - a. Devotions - To help with processing, will be held every morning at breakfast; responsibility for devotions will be rotated amongst the group, volunteers encouraged
 - b. Reflections - will be held every evening, usually after dinner. Participation means being present – you do not need to talk if you do not want to.
3. We are learning about the poor in El Salvador, and how they live. That means:
 - a. flexibility in schedule
 - b. conveniences (such as coffee first thing in the morning, water, electricity, etc.)
 - c. respect for our hosts and hostesses
4. Meals are not always on time – your responsibility to carry a snack if it is important that you eat at certain times.
 - a. There are 3 meals/day, and not a lot of snack time; it is important not to skip a meal.
 - b. Typical meals can have any of the following: beans, tortillas, vegetables, avocado, eggs, plain rolls, pasta and on occasion chicken.
5. There is a fair amount of walking; it is hot and dusty. When we are in the community, we stay in the school. There is a separate building with toilets. Compost latrines are the norm when we are away from the school. It is very much like camping in tent cabins. This means:
 - a. WATER, WATER, WATER; it is so important to drink lots of water, even if it is warm and doesn't taste all that refreshing.
 - b. Sunscreen/hat
 - c. Bugs at night; you must use a bug repellent at bedtime, especially on your legs and feet.
 - d. Please let at least one of us know if you are experiencing any physical distress (constipation, diarrhea, blisters, bug bites, etc.) that you are not prepared for. Chances are one of us has something to help, and/or can give advice.
 - e. The rule to prevent gastrointestinal problems:
 - i. Peel it, boil it, cook it, or forget it unless Brenda says it's okay to eat.
6. We have a few meetings -
 - a. With community leaders, teachers, healthcare workers, students, etc. They are often slow and laborious (translation) and it is hot. Much of our purpose in going is to listen.
 - b. There is also a worship service every year; date and time can change depending on the circumstances in the community.
7. There are two scheduled meetings in San Salvador; one with Funsalprodese who helps with the administration of the scholarships and one with IMU who helps with the administration of funds for the clinic. *This year we are hoping to meet with them in the community.*
8. We plan to meet and/or have dinner with the Bishop of the Salvadoran Lutheran Church, Medardo Gomez.
9. It is expected that all will participate in the activities – show of solidarity.
 - a. Please remain flexible as scheduled events don't always start at the designated time
 - b. The daily schedule will be reviewed at breakfast; this is a good time to voice your concerns or needs. It is expected that every one will be present for this.
 - c. We are a group, and we see a LOT of each other.
 - d. Respecting the opinions, experiences, and feelings of other group members is the first step toward building solidarity.
10. Most important. . . we want you to have fun on this trip, stay healthy, enjoy the experience of visiting El Salvador. It is important for your health and safety to follow the safety instructions of our in-country coordinator.

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What to Bring / How to Pack

1. Luggage (per airline guidelines)
 - a. One carry-on, 45 lbs.
 - i. "3-1-1" policy for carry-on
 1. 3 oz or smaller containers of toothpaste and other liquids
 2. Gels and paste must be in a 1-qt clear plastic bag
 - a. i.e. lipstick, chapstick, gels, liquid medications
 3. Bags must be zip-top
 4. 1 baggie per traveler is allowed
 5. Must be in hand at security checkpoint or put in security conveyor container
 - b. Two checked pieces, 50 lbs. each
 - i. One will be for your personal stuff
 - ii. The other one will be used for medical supplies, clothes and other items collected
2. Identification
 - a. Your passport (make sure it has not expired), make a photocopy and keep separate in your luggage
 - b. If you are a minor, a letter from both parents stating it is okay for you to be on the ES Delegation visiting El Salvador
3. Clothing, bedding and personal items
 - a. Warm weather clothes; 1 sweatshirt or jacket (sometimes there are some chilly nights). It is possible to have some clothes washed – they may not get back to you for 2 days.
 - b. Walking shoes and socks, sandals
 - c. Pajamas
 - d. Pillow
 - e. Sheet (flannel or other); some of us bring a bottom sheet, and a flannel sheet as a blanket.
 - f. Towel and wash cloth
 - g. Toiletries: Soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc. (bathing is done at the sink at the bathroom w/a tarp for some privacy.
 - h. Water bottle
 - i. Flashlight
 - j. Day Pack for hikes and walks between communities
 - k. If you wear contacts, please bring glasses; the dust may bother your eyes.
 - l. Camera
 - m. Journal/notebook and pen/pencil
 - n. Sunscreen
 - o. Insect repellent
 - p. Tissue packets
 - q. Pepto-bismol tablets
 - r. 1 or 2 hangers for hanging towels or handwashing.

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4. Money
 - a. The US dollar is the currency in El Salvador (you may still see reference to colons)
 - b. Your in-county cost covers
 - i. Lodging
 - ii. Food
 - iii. Transportation
 - iv. Water
 - v. Honorariums
 - vi. Stipend for Brenda Hubbard, our interpreter
 - vii. Unforeseen costs
 - c. What is not covered
 - i. Tourist Card - You will purchase at the Salvadoran airport when you go through Immigration and Customs; cost is \$10.
 - ii. Shopping
 - iii. \$1-2 for Ana Ruth if you have her wash some clothes (\$.75-\$1.00/piece).
 - iv. We tip Keki our bus driver, Brenda our interpreter and the folks at OASIS
 - d. The Exit Tax is part of your airfare.