

St. Monica-St. George Parish
Twinning Research Project
2003-2005

This is a brief outline of the research process used to investigate twinning. The entire process took about two years.

Phase 1: Initial Research: The Social Action committee was charged with looking at the possibility of the parish to enter into a twinning relationship.

- A. Created a “research core team” of four members to begin the research process:
1. Met with Mike Gable from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Mission Office for information about twinning and how to begin
 2. Received documents and videos on twinning along with potential twinning partners
 3. Contacted Bro Scott Obrecht from the Franciscan Mission Office for possible twinning partners.
 4. Presentations by several workers from various missions: Jamaica, Border Experience and Columbia
 5. Contacted local parishes already twinning for information
 6. Identified 8 possible sites
- B. Acquainted the parish with the plan:
1. Created awareness of twinning within the parish through bulletin announcements, homilies, flyers and special events
 2. Continued to network with pastor and key members of parish team
 3. Mike Gable and Dennis Berling spoke at each Mass about the benefits of twinning.
 4. Mission Sunday Appeal/Brunch: Held a presentation on “Mission Life” given by two Franciscan Friars from Jamaica
 5. Held a luncheon of approximately 20 selected parishioners who had mission experience. The purpose was to gain knowledge from their life experiences in helping our selection. Received recommendations for additional mission sites
 6. Conducted a survey of parishioners after each of the four Sunday Masses to gauge interest in twinning
 7. Presented a display of each potential twinning partner at the parish “International Luncheon” including surveys designed to gauge the interest of various locations
 8. Compiled information and presented to the Pastor for discussion with the Pastoral Team. Received approval to continue

Phase 2: Moving Forward

A. Conducted an internal assessment by hosting a brain storming session open to all parishioners for the purpose of identifying who we are as a community and what we were looking for in a twinning relationship

B. Sponsored the “Salt & Light” program to facilitate the integration of the Church’s social mission into the life of the parish

C. Each research team member took one or more of the missions and conducted in-depth research to produce reports including; location, cultural or political issues, expectations of mission, travel information, cost of medical care, cost of travel and other issues

1. From this information we were able to narrow down our list to five possibilities: Appalachia, New Mexico, Jamaica, Guatemala and Chile
2. Recruited parishioners willing to travel to each for further explorations if possible
3. Developed a “Mission Twinning Evaluation Form” to aid travelers
4. Travel process took 6 months to complete

Final Committee Review: The twinning team met with the Pastor and Bro. Scott Obrect to review the evaluation forms and hear comments from those who traveled

1. From this information, we unanimously selected St. Joseph Parish in Jamaica
2. Pastor drafted a letter and Covenant agreement to send to the prospective mission

Where we are now (at time of document’s creation – early 2005):

A. Created a rotating Twinning Core Team of six parishioners including the Pastor, who are willing to provide leadership for St. Monica-St. George’s commitment to building this twinning relationship

B. The Twinning Core Team has:

1. Divided into sub-committees overseeing such areas as: Prayer Support, Travel and Hosting, Communication and Cultural Awareness, Pen-pal program
2. Conducted a survey so parishioners could sign-up for specific areas of interest
3. Contacted every parishioner who had signed up to volunteer for the program. There were more than 50 involved in the various sub-committees.
4. Continued to raise awareness in the parish through pulpit announcements, homilies, displays and special events.

C. Currently preparing for visit in October 2005 by the Core Team from St. Joseph’s parish.

D. Discussing the possibility of establishing an 18 month plan of activity and events to guide the activities of both parishes and their committees.