

Sister Marise - Missionary, Nicaragua



“My experience as a missionary for the past forty-five years in Latin America has enriched me. The people are very open and receiving. My approach and attitude is one of walking with them,” shared Sister Marise Meis. I am their friend and listener, but I am not their savior. I also encourage their becoming empowered to take leadership in their communities.”

“It is very heartwarming to see the young people from our parish school, Saint Rose Lima, make their way in the world. One of our students is now a surgeon in Puerto Cabezas. Several are doctors in various parts of the country. Another is a medical student in his first year of internship. Many are certified teachers in grade and high school levels. One is the coordinator for the local extension of URACCAN – a university of the Atlantic Coast. When United Hearts for Health, a not for profit organization founded in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, worked with Rotary International and Care International on the well project for Rosita’s hospital, one of our former students was involved. At that time she was very much a part of bringing safe drinking water to the Rosita Hospital. When I first came to Nicaragua, it used to be that only men were in leadership,” said Sister Marise. “That has now changed. Women can now be seen as administrators and directors of organizations.”

“Living in community with other sisters and praying together has strengthened me as I work among the poor,” shared Sister Marise. “I can’t get too discouraged. In the end it is God’s work and I am a collaborator in it. I have found that the people in the rural areas have a very profound faith and trust in God although they may be visited only once a year by a priest. During the rest of the year they are led by a trained delegate or catechist who is an instructor of baptism and matrimony. I help with the catechetical coordination of 55 rural communities that are part of our parish. Forty-five years of missionary work has transformed and blessed my life.”