

Memories of Maracay, Venezuela

Photos and reflection shared by Tim Janski, of Rice, MN, a delegate who visited our partner diocese of Maracay in January of 2004.

On January 6th, 2004, 11 delegates left the Diocese of St. Cloud Minnesota to visit our Sister Diocese of Maracay in Venezuela. Most of us did not know each other very well, but after 2 weeks on this trip we all felt like we were very good friends.



Top Photo: Diocese of St. Cloud, Minnesota Delegation visits Maracay, Venezuela in January, 2004. Bottom Photo: Tim Janski with Venezuela hosts.

We visited many parts of the Diocese of Maracay, which is located in the northeastern part of the country. Our mode of transportation was mainly taxi cars, although sometimes we even rode in the back of pickup trucks. The countryside of Venezuela is very diverse. In the north, near the coast of the Caribbean, the land is lush and mountainous, almost a rainforest. Inland toward the south, the land flattens out to a dry plain.

Our group was together during the day, when we celebrated Mass and visited local churches and communities. In the evening, we went out in pairs to stay with host families. Our host families shared a great gift with us that many people in the United States have forgotten many years ago – that is family life. The people of Venezuela still eat their meals together; they sit, talk and sing together. Family life is not deterred by television, video games, and a fast-paced life as it is with many families in the United States.

The communities that we visited were a great highlight of the trip. They ranged from the busy city of Maracay to small, rural communities like Barbacoas. Our visit to communities in the

Diocese of Maracay gave us views of how the Venezuelan people live, from the rich to the poor and everyone in between. The people were very gracious wherever we went. We were greeted with open arms, and with more food and drink than we could eat.

The people of Venezuela have taught us many things about their country and people that have enlightened all of us. I hope we all take these life lessons back to our own families and communities to change the way we think about the world outside the United States.

Thoughts from other delegates:

“The faith of the people was great and I felt a lot of love and caring from the people.”

“I loved the close-knit families; many, many activities included all the members of the family.”

“Highlights of the trip were experiencing their worship; meeting the people; working on the language; dancing after nearly 40 years; living in the homes of the wonderful people; tasting their food.”



Top Photo: Fr. Tony Kroll with Fr. Alexis Torrealba during a visit to Maracay, Venezuela in January, 2004.

Bottom Photo: A Venezuelan Welcome.