



JOURNEY OF HOPE

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November 2020

TENDING THE MISSION

Thank you!



**“In the depths of every heart, love creates bonds and expands existence, for it draws people out of themselves and towards others.”
~ Pope Francis**



*Responding to Pandemic 2020 through Generosity in Action.
Providence CAN provide, Providence DID provide, Providence WILL provide.*

WARM WELCOME FROM OUR DIRECTOR AND PRINCIPAL



Sister Elizabeth Dunn, O.P.

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Mission Statement

The mission of Hope Rural School is to offer hope to families.

The school primarily serves children from immigrant families by providing them with a Catholic Elementary education in grades Pre-K through 5 in an environment that nurtures the Gospel values of mercy, justice, and love, through fostering the principles of Christian discipleship; supporting, guiding and encouraging parents in the education of their children; developing an appreciation and respect for heritage; encouraging and enabling graduates to reach their full potential through advanced education.

Dear Friends:

Just one visit to Hope Rural School is all it takes to be captivated by the mission.

This was certainly evident at our 40th Anniversary Celebration held on our Hope Rural School Campus, March 8, 2020. Those who gathered could remember our early beginnings and so appreciated all that has been accomplished. This event highlighted the dedication and steadfastness of the founders, donors, board members, teachers, staff, volunteers, students and families.

Your unfailing support and love of our school has kept us alive during many successes and challenges. Since March 16, we tended to our mission at Hope Rural School differently, as we faced times of uncertainty for our families and our school was closed. During this time of added concerns with the pandemic surrounding all of us, we were blessed with many caring people who embraced us as family. **We asked ourselves, what is one thing we learned about living a life of meaning and gratitude during the COVID-19 pandemic? My response:** “The COVID-19 pandemic has given me an opportunity to reappraise everything about needs vs wants...Needs are few: life, love, food, home, and support from one another. In addition, I believe that God’s love and care for us is far stronger than any strain of any virus.” Read more of our staff responses to this question in this newsletter.

We’re entering into a season of gratitude, a time when we pause to give thanks for the many blessings in our lives: our loved ones, our friends, food on our table and a roof over our heads. There’s no doubt this season will be different from any other we’ve experienced. My prayer is that you will be safe and well and that you’ll feel the care of those who love you, even if you’re not together in person. Thank you for **TENDING THE MISSION of HOPE RURAL** with us and for supporting us in this deeply rewarding work. ~ *Sr. Elizabeth*

“The thankful heart opens our eyes to a multitude of blessings that continually surround us.”

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES! Almost a year ago, many of us gathered on the campus of Hope Rural School to celebrate our Gala 40th, our Ruby Anniversary. What a celebration we had both outside and inside the Cafetorium!

This year we remember family, friends, co-workers and those with whom and to whom we minister. We pray in gratitude for keeping us safe and share with the world our hope for better times to come.

This 41st year, we praise God that we have been able to open our school to our children and have not had anyone of the children, staff, or ourselves become sick. We try to live as “normal” as can be but miss YOU! We look forward to 2021.

The image for a 41st anniversary is land. We pray for our land and for our climate while we search for ways to respect and protect God’s creation.

My response to the pandemic question: “I will remember... face masks, social distancing, living through the “new normal” with our children and staff, celebrating in spite of circumstances, praying, changing plans and loving those far away and near to me.” ~ *Sr. Martha*



Sr. Martha Rohde, O.P.

♥ 40th Anniversary Gala Celebration in Hope Rural Courtyard ~ Good Food ~ Treasured Friends

can be known. We are the voices and we are the hands, for bringing peace to our land! We Remember, We Celebrate We Believe!



~ Love ~ Beautiful Memories ~ Support of our Mission ~ Relationships are at the Heart of our Ministry ~ Children are the Gift that

We Give to the Future ~ We are the Family and we are the home, we are Hope Rural where love

MEET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS!

We extend a warm welcome to our new **Fourth Grade Teacher ~ Ms. Sandy Perez**



I recently graduated from Palm Beach Atlantic University in May 2020. I pursued education because children bring me joy and I feel like that is where God has called me to be. Around the year 2009 I was sitting in the same 4th grade classroom I am now teaching in. It all feels like a dream come true, being able to do what I love while being able to express my faith.

I am glad I get to be a part of my students' lives and make an impact on them the same way my teachers did with me when I went here. Being a first generation high school and college graduate is a blessing and I was blessed in an even bigger way when I was offered this job opportunity. I am grateful to be able to give back to the place that taught me so many valuable lessons and shaped me to be who I am today. I am honored to be a part of the Hope Rural family!

We extend a warm welcome to our new **PreK-3 Teaching Assistant ~ Miss Angelica Mendoza**



My name is Angelica Mendoza. I am from Guatemala. I feel happy and blessed to be part of this amazing family at Hope Rural School as the PreK-3 Teacher Aide. My heart is filled with joy for countless reasons. Being around children in this meaningful environment and recognizing that education plays a fundamental role at this stage creates a higher level of responsibility and for me, a stronger relationship with God. Many parents have trusted this school to be a valuable promoter and necessary tool in their children's upbringing. As an immigrant myself, it's an honor to now become part of such an esteemed place and help

continue this the school's mission to bring hope to families. I humbly put myself at this school's service.

VILMA SHAW SCHOLARS PROGRAM "THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE"

Hope Rural School continues to extend its hands to former students through the "Vilma Shaw Scholars Program" which offers scholarships to those in pursuit of a higher education. Vilma Shaw believed strongly in the mission of Hope Rural School and has endowed scholarships to encourage and support our students as they prepare for the next step in their education experience. Currently there are Eighteen Shaw Scholars studying in various fields at IRSC, FAU, UNF, UCF, S. Adventist University, and the Dental Academy of the Palm Beaches.



"I was in the first PreK class and fortunate enough to attend Hope Rural for seven years, What I learned at Hope I know could ONLY have been taught here. This school influenced my life in many ways, has made me become a better person, and for that I am grateful. The most important lesson that I learned at Hope is that no one can take away my education.

This school is built around helping one another. The volunteers made a difference in our lives. My dream is to be able to come back one day and be a volunteer at Hope Rural. I hope to make a difference in others lives.

~ **Sheila Vincente, Indian River State College - Nursing**

WHAT'S ONE THING YOU LEARNED ABOUT LIVING A LIFE OF MEANING AND GRATITUDE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

~ Responses from our Teachers and Staff ~

"I learned that living with less created for me a life of greater value. The Lord provided for all my needs and I notice more of the beauty that HE created in people and the world around me".
~ **Ginny Daly, Fifth Grade Teacher**

"I learned to not take anything I have for granted. We have to live each day as if it's our last because we don't know the plan God has for us."
~ **Sandy Perez, Fourth Grade Teacher.**

"I learned that everything is perfect in God's timing. That with God, a negative situation can be used for good and to grow closer to family and friends and to appreciate the little things in life we often miss!"
~ **Erin Sercia, Third Grade Teacher**

"Perhaps God wants us to stop the busyness in our lives so that we can spend more time with our families, reflect on where we are heading, and grow in holiness, goodness, and grace."
~ **Taryn McCrink, Second Grade Teacher**

"In this time of added concerns and uncertainty, our students need us more than ever to provide a caring, loving, stable, fun engaging atmosphere at school. We are providing this at Hope Rural school, and that makes me proud!"
~ **Erin Dilla First Grade Teacher**

"I learned that family bonding time is really important. I am grateful to God for the extra time I get to spend with my children who are growing up so quickly. Everything is changing, and we need to show compassion and love to one another more now, than ever."
~ **Erica Lozano, First / Kindergarten Aide**

"I learned that life gives us the opportunity to better appreciate the things we typically took for granted, Being around family is a special part of life that I value even more now."
~ **Maria Cruz, Kindergarten Teacher**

"I've learned to appreciate all of the important things I normally take for granted, the love of family, friends and my job. All these lessons of selflessness and new wisdom I hold in my heart."
~ **Guadalupe Martinez, Pre-K 4 Teacher**

"I've learned how to be more compassionate with my brothers and sister. I am trying to be a better person. I believe in God that the virus is leaving soon."
~ **Floridalma Perez, Pre-K 4 Aide**

"I learned was to stay connected with loved ones, display empathy and compassion toward others and share God's love. The pandemic is teaching us the meaning of life and its purpose. Let's handle life with prayers."
~ **Kendly Lopez, Pre-K 3 Teacher**

"I've learned to deeply appreciate all of the important things I normally take for granted, the love of family, friends and my job. All these lessons of selflessness and new wisdom I hold in my heart."
~ **Angelica Mendoza, Pre-K 3 Aide**

"Life can change unexpectedly without warning. The only thing we can stand on is faith in God and the Virgin Mary, to see hope. Our Faith allows us to enjoy our days with gratitude."
~ **Carmen Ahlborn, Library/Media Coordinator**

"The pandemic has taught me to more grateful to God, to value more my family, health and life. Also to show solidarity with my community by given them moral and economic support when they need it."
~ **Azucena Lopez, P.E. Teacher and Parenting Counts Facilitator**

"I have learned to appreciate the saying of 'Tomorrow is never promised'. We must appreciate the people in our life, forgive often, love more and serve others with sincerity."
~ **Susy Lopez, Title One Support Staff**

"I learned to appreciate what is surrounding me. My family and friends are as close as a call or a letter. I have learned to slow down and take time to observe nature and treasure memories."
~ **Susan Kirch, Title One Support Staff**

"I appreciate my family a lot more - the pandemic has brought us closer. We experienced a bit of set back, but we continue to move forward. I thank my God for our blessings and keeping us safe."
~ **Raquel Martinez, School Receptionist and Secretary**

"With the 'new normal' of our life today, I am truly grateful that my faith and trust in Jesus Christ influences my way of life. Maybe God is using 2020 for us to see that HE needs to be in charge - the only One who can truly guide us."
~ **Betty Ann Suder, Administrative Assistant and Music Teacher**

STUDENT LIFE ON CAMPUS...

“The school primarily serves children from immigrant families by providing them with a Catholic elementary education from PreK3 - Grade 5.” (excerpt from Hope Rural School Mission Statement)
 Currently our 2020-2021 enrollment is 86% Guatemalan or Mexican, 12% Haitian, and 2% White.



“Children are a message we send to a time we shall not see”
 ~ Sister Carol Putnam, RSCJ, Co-Founder, Hope Rural School

REMEMBERING AND HONORING OUR LOVED ONES

Memorial / Tribute Gifts

Remembering your loved ones through memorial gifts in lieu of flowers and tribute gifts in honor of birthdays, anniversaries, or other meaningful events, is a thoughtful and life-giving way to continue the mission work of Hope.

Please also consider remembering Hope Rural School in your will...a tribute for a lifetime.

Your contributions bless many! You are in our prayers and thoughts each day.

