

Mexican church leader visits Nicaragua



The president of Lutheran Church–Mexico, Rev. Abiut Fajrado (fourth from left) met with pastors and churchworkers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nicaragua, LCC's mission.

THE PRESIDENT of the Lutheran Church–Mexico, Rev. Abiut Fajrado, visited the LCC mission in Nicaragua in early May. During his four days there, he travelled to several congregations, talked to the people, met the missionaries, pastors, deacons, deaconesses and Christian Educators. LCC missionary Rev. Sandor Arguello reports, "Rev. Fajrado was so very welcome by the people. He expressed his sincere love and partnership in Christ to everyone who received him with joy and fraternity. For our young Lutheran Church in Nicaragua visits like this of Rev. Fajrado make the people feel strong in God. They realize they are not alone."

Rev. Fajrado expressed his gratitude to Lutheran Church–Canada and President Ralph Mayan for giving him the opportunity to visit Nicaragua and witness what our LCC mission has accomplished in these few years. He was convinced that God's Holy Spirit is at work among these young and faithful church workers. The visit will lead to a closer relationship among these two

Latin American countries and Lutheran Church bodies. Rev. Fajrado is planning to extend an invitation to the Committee for Mission and Social Ministry Services of Lutheran Church–Canada and mission executive Rev. Dr. Leonard Harms to visit Mexico. He considers it important to establish and maintain communication and coordination between these Lutheran Church partners.

Rev. Fajrado also witnessed the work of a volunteer construction team from Calvary Lutheran Church, Red Deer, and Foothills Lutheran Church, Calgary, Alberta. (Full report in July/August edition)

Rev. Arguello said that the Nicaraguan church's missionaries, pastors, deacons, deaconesses and Christian educators were excited with Rev. Fajrado's visit. "They learned so many things about the Lutheran ministry in Mexico that were and are so similar to the reality of Nicaragua," he said. "These experiences can be taken as good lessons to strengthen the ministry and mission in Nicaragua."

From a report by Rev. Sandor Arguello

Canadian grant for PNG school

HIGHLANDS INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL in Papua New Guinea received a grant of 99,000 Kina (approx. \$40,000 Cdn) from the Canada Fund to build a girls dormitory. The school's Canadian headmaster, LCC missionary Brent Kilback reports the school has collected sufficient funds (about \$80,000US) to begin construction. The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives is a Canadian government aid program administered through Canadian High Commissions and Embassies around the world. It responds to requests for assistance. Kilback reports that one of the fund's coordinators visited the school and asked them to submit a proposal, which they did.

The main aim behind the grant is to provide more opportunity for women and education in Enga. This is a very traditional and somewhat patriarchal society where more support for women is needed. "The amount is enough to begin, but the conditions of the grant is that we raise additional funds," Kilback said. "We have already successfully raised 135,000 kina from the Enga Children's Fund, a provincial government agency in Enga, with an aim to benefit future generations of Engans."

To further serve the women of the area, the school now offers a free Information Technology (IT) course to some grassroots women from a remote area near the school. Twelve young women from a remote area near the school come once a week to study computers. Kilback noted that the women come from the area recently troubled by tribal warfare. "Most had never seen a computer before," he observed. "These women are progressing quickly. It is a success story."