“Unbound”: Giving Hope to Those in Poverty

This week we are pleased to welcome Fr. Jerry Hackenmueller, who is a retired priest from our Archdiocese who will be present at the Masses to speak about ***“Unbound,”*** a nonprofit organization helping to give hope to those in poverty. Fr. Jerry served for many years in Venezuela. Spending 11 years there, he came to treasure the richness of the Latin American culture. He continues to apply his Hispanic Ministry across the US primarily to Spanish-speaking communities on behalf of Unbound as well as in his home Archdiocese.

The vision for ***Unbound*** began with siblings Bob, Bud and Jim Hentzen and Nadine Hentzen Pearce and their friend Jerry Tolle. Bob and Jerry were former missionaries who, while working in Latin America, witnessed the devastating effects of poverty on families struggling heroically to make better lives for their children. Guided by faith and rooted in Catholic social teaching, the founders envisioned a program that would invite people to partner with families to support, encourage and empower them.

Started as “Christian Foundation for Children” in 1981, the first-year revenue was $14,000. The 5 co-founders used Christmas card lists from family and friends and ads in Catholic publications and visits to local parishes to get thing started. A year later they sponsored the first child, who today lives and works in Bogata and has two children of her own. Two years later the elderly were included in the sponsorship program. It would spread across the ocean to Asia and Africa by the mid 1989s.

Today, as a part of the program people are invited to become monthly sponsors of a child or an elderly person. By way of a $40 monthly donation for educational sponsorship. Unbound helps break people from the cycle of poverty, giving them a new chance at life.

Unbound also helps family growth by offering meaningful ways to make a difference. There are 5 special funds that can be given to allowing donors to target their donation; there’s the general donation which ***Unbound*** directs to where it has the most impact, which include scholarships throughout the world, technology improvements and safety improvements to Unbound offices worldwide and family-initiated opportunities; a scholarship program that helps students who feel forced to choose between continuing in school or dropping out; an Agents of Change fund that allows families to change communities, where donations target community problems and money will be used for small grants; these include everything from handwashing stations to soccer fields to roads; a Critical Needs fun for health and family emergencies; and a Birthday and Christmas Fund allowing those in a sponsorship program to experience the joy of celebrating these days.

To learn more about this ministry visit ***Unbound.org.***

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of being a part of this powerful ministry. As we heard about last week with Jesus walking with the disciples to Emmaus, through the

good work of ***Unbound*** we can also walk with one another helping those in need on their journey.

God bless,

Fr. Paul