



Guidelines for the Christ the Healer Medical Mission Program

Christ the Healer, a medical mission program of the Pontifical Mission Societies, Archdiocese of New Orleans, is a service program for Nicaragua. The Christ the Healer mission is open to all dominations. Nevertheless, as the name indicates, the source of our service and efforts are inspired from and are found in Christ. **We are there at the invitation of the Bishop of Granada, and thus our actions build up or tear down the image of the church for the people.** We are also there by **the invitation of the Health Care Ministry of Nicaragua. Christ the Healer goes to Nicaragua to "observe, assist, and teach when invited," it does not go to "rescue" the people of Nicaragua.** Our invitation can be revoked at any time by the government.

AN IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER : It is beyond the scope and purpose of Christ the Healer to invite and/or sponsor the travel and treatment of Nicaraguan patients who desire or could benefit from treatment in the United States. If a participant in Christ the Healer wishes to sponsor an individual in such a manner, it is with the understanding that such an effort is a personal endeavor for which Christ the Healer can assume no responsibility.

Here are some guidelines that will assist you in your mission experience.

Called to Mission: While it is important to experience the culture of Nicaragua, it is more important to remember that God called you to this mission experience. Mass, reflection, and prayer are an integral part of the mission experience. It also includes the action of assisting others medically with care and compassion. Excessive behavior can hinder the experience. Please do extracurricular activities in moderation.

Donations: Any type of donations, gifts, currency, etc., are not to be handed out to individuals. Donations are to be given to the appropriate organizations/ hogars./parishes to distribute as necessary. The donation then benefits more people and eliminates the possible abuse by an individual.

Safe Environment: Nicaraguan children or adults are **NOT** to be given lodging or transportation at any time. This is to be strictly adhered to due to liability exposure. The mandated of the Safe Environment Act of the Archdiocese of New Orleans is to be followed by all participants.

It is a sad reality that child prostitution is a serious problem. Therefore any of the above mentioned activities can be easily misunderstood by the youth or by others. You are invited to speak with any of the directors at Jesús Amigo about this sad reality.

Renting Vehicles: Individuals who rent vehicles do so at their own risk. Furthermore, this practice is strongly discouraged. Any auto accident can result in incarceration!

Cultural Sensitivity : As Americans going to Nicaragua, we need to be aware that many attitudes, customs, and beliefs that we see as positive are not held in such high esteem in other cultures. For example, U.S. citizens are often seen as informal and outgoing. In other cultures, these same traits might be seen as rude, immature, and/or boastful. As missionary volunteers, we must be aware of cultural differences, and be able to work effectively in an atmosphere of differing expectations and values. Throughout the world there are many different ways of doing things, most of which are intrinsically neither better nor worse than our own. They are simply different. **Christ the Healer goes to serve the people of Nicaragua. It is important to treat people with respect and appreciate their cultural values and gifts.**

Politics: We encourage everyone to be neutral with regard to expressing opinions about the national government and political issues.

Your commitment to serve the poor is a blessing to the program of Christ the Healer and to the people of Nicaragua. The guidelines are in place to protect both you and the Nicaraguan community.