

Anti-Racism Workshop In Guatemala: A Step Toward Diversity And Equity



Sister Rosita Sidasmed (far right) joins participants in the anti-racism workshop.

Chanmagua, Guatemala, became the site of encuentro and a venue to delve into the work of anti-racism, one of the Critical Concerns. CCASA's anti-racism committee, made up of Sisters Dina Altamiranda and Rosita Sidasmed and Associates Alexis Stephens and Pat Liverpool, organized the workshop with the aim of promoting awareness and action against this form of discrimination, as well as an appreciation for diversity.

Prior to the event, committee members met in Panama to plan the details as well as to outline the program for the coming year. Guided by

Sisters Julie Matthews and Sarita Vasquez, who joined virtually from Belize, they dedicated themselves to ensuring the workshop would be effective.



Bishop Angel Antonio Recinos Lemus (center) of the diocese of Zacapa visited the workshop, reinforcing the importance of the initiative. Sister Dina Altamiranda (right) listens to the discussion.

There were 27 participants from the community in the workshop, held April 11-12. Professor Abel Villeda, of the José Trinidad Cabañas Basic Center, facilitated the sessions and provided an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of colonialism in Guatemala and how it has influenced

today's racial dynamics. Through breakout sessions, participants explored different kinds of racism and shared personal and community experiences.

One of the most significant moments was when attendees acted out representations of different forms of racism, highlighting the need to recognize and combat these attitudes in all areas of daily life. Bishop Angel Antonio Recinos Lemus of the diocese of Zacapa visited the workshop, reinforcing the importance of the initiative.

The closing included an emotional celebration where participants placed flowers on an altar in a symbolic gesture of forgiveness for racism both locally and globally.



As the workshop closed, participants placed offerings on the altar, seeking forgiveness for racism worldwide.

Following the event, sisters met with associates and discussed the incredible work that they do to sustain and expand the Mercy charism and the legacy of Sisters Caridad Desell and Natividad Alonzo (both deceased). A very emotional moment was when the children of the "Growing with Hope and Joy" program, run by Casa Caridad, came to greet them.

Sisters and associates highlighted the importance of educating future generations about the relevance of respect and diversity. The anti-racism workshop in Chanmagua was a step forward in building a more just and equitable society for all.

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