In 2014, for the third consecutive year the Clearwater Deanery DR Mission Team will return to San Bernabé, Pizarrete in the Dominican Republic. The 2014 team will once again work with Fr. Ramón Gill, senior warden Altagracia Puello, and others from San Bernabé. Last year’s team included missioners from Clearwater as well as New Jersey, North Carolina, Canada, and Louisiana. They helped lead Vacation Bible School and worked on construction of the new San Bernabé church, painting it inside and out, and building the pews.

**This year’s VBS team** will again will use the VBS curriculum written by the DR Diocese and help with crafts, teaching and PE. The VBS will be held in the “new” colegio San Bernabé while the construction team works on the Church and then move into the church building while work is being done on the school. The number of children in attendance last year averaged 120. Due to the limitation of space, this year we hope to limit the number of to approximately 100 children per day.

**The goal of this year’s construction team** is to complete the new church building including, electrical, painting, varnishing the pews built by the 2013 team, and repairing and sealing the roof on the San Bernabé preschool, and as well as other minor maintenance items. Additionally, and as time permits, the team will work at the nearby San Matias School to power wash the roof and apply new sealer to stop a major water infiltration problem which has plagued the school for some years. The cost for materials to complete church, repair the school and seal the roof at San Matias is estimated at $15,000. The Clearwater deanery normally raises around $12,000 to $13,000 for materials. Bishop Holguín has committed the DR Diocese to put in up to $2,000 so as to finish the first floor of San Bernabé this summer.

**Background:** In the late 1990’s the Episcopal priest at La Transfiguración in Baní started visiting the small rural town of Pizarrete a couple miles off the main highway connecting Santo Domingo and Baní, about 50 minutes outside Santo Domingo. At first they met under a shade tree and later next door to Dona Altagracia’s house.
Then around the mid-2000’s the DR Diocese purchased a 41,000 ft² lot (~3,800 m²) which would serve as the future home for San Bernabé. The lot contained a small four-room house and a large enclosed shed which once served as a rice mill warehouse with a gasoline powered rice mill. Most of the lot is covered by concrete a slab that was used to dry rice. The house became the San Bernabé preschool, and the rice mill warehouse the new church.

For the last two years the Clearwater Deanery mission teams have worked at San Bernabé in Pizarrete, helping with VBS and working on the conversion of the old rice mill warehouse into a church. In 2013 the VBS worked with Dominican leaders and held the VBS in the small San Bernabé preschool building. Meanwhile, the construction team divided its 13 members into two groups. One group painted the new church and the other group built pews. By God’s grace we will finish the first floor this year.

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Note: If you want to participate on the July 19-26 team please contact Renee Liles or Bill Kunkle at the numbers below. You may contribute to the San Bernabé project through your local church or by sending contributions to the Dominican Development Group, P.O. Box 272261, Tampa, FL 33688. Our fund raising goal per person is $1800 which is used for airline tickets, lodging, meals, local transportation, and materials.

For further information contact:
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