

# HIM Update

Newsletter of Humanitarian Interfaith Ministries

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## HIM helps build San Jose shelter to care for homeless street children



*Father Maurizio (right to left) with Oscar Arias, President of Costa Rica and Nobel Peace Prize winner, and Father Sergio Valverde during the inauguration ceremonies in San Jose, Costa Rica*

In October of 2006, Father Maurizio received a gift from a good friend of a round-trip airline ticket to anywhere in the world. Rather than using it to take a personal vacation, he traveled to Costa Rica to see if there was a way he could help some of the many children living on the streets of San Jose.

While in Costa Rica, Father Maurizio met a Catholic priest from the dioceses of San Jose who he describes as “a true saint.” Father Sergio Valverde, in addition to being a parish priest, runs an organization called Asociacion Obras del Espiritu Santo (Association of the Works of the Holy Spirit). Along with over 400 volunteers, Father Sergio cares for thousands of the poorest people living in the capital city of Costa Rica. He and Father Maurizio instantly became friends since they share a common interest in

helping those who can't help themselves.

Father Sergio, with the support of Archbishop Hugo of San Jose, was in the middle of constructing a three-story building to carry out his work of serving the poor and disenfranchised. He explained that the building remained unfinished because he had just lost an important source of funding. Father Maurizio made an offer. He promised to try to raise the money to complete the building if one of the three stories would be dedicated specifically to caring for homeless street children.

He returned home and raised the \$130,000 needed to complete the building. A little more than one year later on December 1, 2007, he traveled to Costa Rica again to participate in the inauguration of the new building along with the President of Costa Rica and over 2,000 members of the community.

As promised, a large part of the center and its resources are now being used to rescue orphaned and abandoned children from the streets of San Jose.



*The new three-story building used to serve the poor including many homeless children living on the streets of San Jose*