

Gifts We Offer

- brother Michael

IN MEXICO THIS YEAR, the Benedictine Sisters enabled us to visit the epicenter of the devastating earthquake of September 2017. The city of Jojutla is a busy agricultural center and in the downtown center the large parish church is no longer open to the public. A large Catholic school, also located in the downtown core, had been completely destroyed, and we met with the Sisters who offered their lives in service to the children who attended the school. They were getting ready to rebuild and start again.

The economic help that many friends gave in trust to us was very much appreciated and an important part of recovery, yet the needs of the people remain immense. The questions include not only the buildings but the heart of a people, and it became very clear to us that only through personal relationships could aid be given.

Because of the scope of the problem we continued to reflect on how we could respond. I wrote these few lines afterwards:

What may we offer to our world?
What gift to give back?
a way of prayer
a way of gentleness
of hope

The lack of punctuation in the last three lines speaks of the humility that I wish to convey.

We now have new friends in Jojutla who will continue to do much selfless work in their communities. Hopefully our way of life will be present to them as a source of strength and hope. ■



Destroyed Church in Jojutla.



Sisters showing site of destroyed school.