

# Teens called to help people of El Salvador

The Office of the Propagation of the Faith is inviting teens ages 16 to 18 to apply for a service journey to El Salvador, July 22-29.

"I want to expose the youth of the archdiocese to another culture while assessing the needs both spiritually and physically of the people of the Diocese of Chalatenango," said Deacon Rodrigue Mortel, M.D., director of the Office of the Propagation of the Faith and the Baltimore-Haiti Solidarity Project.

As part of this service trip the teens will work with first- and second-graders at St. John the Baptist School in the Cathedral parish, one of 24 parishes in the Diocese of Chalatenango. Participants should be ready for manual labor because they will help build a church in the town of Agua Caliente.

"The youth of the diocese should be exposed to another culture and see how people live in a developing country," said Deacon Mortel. "It's an opportunity to see the face of Christ in the poor."

El Salvador is rich in culture and history, including the journey and sacrifice of Archbishop Óscar Arnulfo Romero who took on the cause of the poor, said Deacon Mortel. The group will visit the COAR (the Children's Community of Óscar Arnulfo Romero) School and orphanage.

Applications can be found online at [www.archbalt.org](http://www.archbalt.org), and the deadline is May 11. The teens will be interviewed by Deacon Mortel on May 24, and the names of the eight selected will be announced shortly thereafter. Applicants do not have to know Spanish to participate. Participants will need to reserve and pay for their own plane tickets, but everything else will be taken care of.

"What has happened to the youth in previous trips is they are totally changed in their perspective on life," said Deacon Mortel. "They have so much in the United States, it is difficult for them to realize how people can live happily with much less."