

# Farewell to San Nicolas: A dance with the future



Children perform at our going-away party

Before we leave San Nicolas, the people give us a going-away party, a *despidida*. During the dances and songs, a little child of 7 or 8 stands up and recited a few lines of poetry.

The parrot flies through the air  
A bright flower in its beak,  
Don't worry, I will never tell  
How much I love you!

This is responded to with yells of approval and laughter all around. The motion, the color, and the theme of love—such beauty is held within these few lines of verse.

The president of the organization John XXIII, Maria Santana, then tells us, to our surprise, that the latest effort at building community in San Nicolas is the hiring of a dance teacher from the nearby city of Esteli. She speaks of how they hope to preserve their culture and have a more organized presentation for our next visit.

Perhaps this is a key to a new kind of future.

The sisters in San Nicolas are very clear about being a presence of gospel-based reconciliation and unity. Their hope is to enable the people to experience these values through community celebrations of prayer, which the people themselves would lead.

Maybe poetry and dance, laughter, and the challenge of the gospel will enable a new beginning.



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