Guatemala: Adventist youth take to Villa Nueva community offering prayers

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June 25, 2012 - Villa Nueva, Guatemala...Gustavo Menéndez/IAD Staff

Young Seventh-day Adventists in Villa Nueva in the south central region of Guatemala took to the streets to pray for onlookers, neighbors and friends earlier this month. The youth, most of them from Villa Nueva Central Adventist Church, also distributed literature. The event was part of the church's evangelism impact initiative.

The young people carried signs which read "We pray for your health," "We pray for your work," and "We pray for you." They offered hope and prayed for more than 200 families, organizers said.

"We wanted to take advantage of the community's program called 'Steps and Pedals' in Paseo San Isidro, where the streets are closed to only pedestrians," said Pastor Fabian Natareno, district pastor and communication director for the church in south central Guatemala. The program allows hundreds of families to enjoy several activities every weekend promoting family recreation and safe passage for riders on their bycicle, skates and the like, added Natareno.

The initiative in Villa Nueva is the first phase of an aggressive witnessing program the church in the south central region has launched, church leaders said. The program includes medical brigades, book fairs, and prayer journeys which are scheduled to take place every Sunday in Paseo San Isidro streets.

Villa Nueva is considered a high risk red zone and one of the ten most violent cities in Guatemala because of gang activity and drug trafficking, said Pastor Natareno.

"Many people have abandoned their homes for fear of being killed and many live in fear," added Pastor Natareno. He said the main theme promoted by the youth was "God is bigger than your problems".

"The church in Guatemala has given space for our young people to develop their own leadership and take to the streets with a message of hope to their neighbors and friends praying for their work, health and life," said Pastor Guenther Garcia, president for the church in Guatemala. Pastor Garcia joined the young people in the streets during the event.

Jonathan Corado, a youth leader in the Villa Nueva Adventist Church, was happy to be part of a group of young people involved in sharing the love of Christ.

"It's really wonderful to pray for someone else and tell them that Jesus loves them and give them hope in their lives, that is really priceless," said Corado. He said he hopes that more young people get involved in creative activities to reach people with the hope the gospel offers.

For more information on this initiative sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala, visit www.uniondeguatemala.org