



Brother Rigoberto Misa, a recent convert, directs missionary efforts on debris in Comalapa.

Elders Help Rebuild Guatemala City

COMALAPA, GUATEMALA

It takes a lot of faith to move mountains, but even more "works" as has been discovered by the missionaries of the Guatemala Guatemala City Mission.

More than 100 of the missionaries have been spending their preparation days in the small Indian town of Comalapa, in a united effort to help restore and rebuild part of the town, which was completely devastated by the Feb. 4 earthquake.

The town, populated by some 20,000 Cakchiquel Indians, was opened to the missionaries in August 1975. Since that time a man and his wife have been baptized.

On a recent preparation day, two rented buses hauled the crews of missionaries and they arrived in Comalapa at 9 a.m. after several hours over a gravel road, partially covered by landslides in the mountainous area.

Basic instructions were given by project leaders, Elders Boyce Lines and Bleak Powell, full-time agricultural

missionaries laboring in Guatemala. As the missionaries alighted from the buses, they were divided into crews of five or six and issued tools.

They were led down the main road by Rigoberto Misa, recent convert to the Church in Comalapa.

Brother Misa had visited with friends and with the families that were investigating the Church prior to the quake. These families, along with Brother Misa's family, were the first to receive aid in preparation for reconstruction.

The missionaries, who had been working in the Department of Chimaltenango doing proselyting work at the time of the quake and afterwards in the excavation work, were assigned as group leaders due to their experience in handling the fragile ruins and their ability to speak the Indian language.

They were responsible for the labor done at each site under direction of the individual family heads. A prayer was offered at each site with the families concerned before the projects were started.

Major work consisted of clearing off fallen adobe and roofing materials, salvaging all undamaged materials and tearing down walls that were left standing and were hazards.

The rubble was taken to the street where government equipment picked it up.

Many items were salvaged, such as adobe bricks, clay pots, nails and other material that would be valuable in rebuilding.

Many items belonging to those who died and precious to the survivors were uncovered, cleaned and neatly stacked.

On a following Monday, the same group of missionaries went to Sumpango, another Indian town and similar work was accomplished there.

The projects would end by sundown and the missionaries returned to their homes physically exhausted, but happy in the knowledge that they had helped someone in need, and preparing a new people to receive the gospel.



An investigator in Comalapa is one who received help from the missionaries.

STORY AND
PHOTOS BY
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Missionaries from throughout Guatemala unite in clean-up effort after quake in Comalapa.

