



June 21, 2023, Weekly Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana.

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*“What God wants for you, is so much better than what you want for yourself.”*

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Recently over 200 youth and young adults participated in SEARCH 19. SEARCH is a retreat that ministers to young people and has yielded many great conversions over the last 10 years. The retreat features power speakers, creative interactions, healing activities and often culminates with the attendees discovering they have a real purpose to their lives. Fr. Jesse OMI, who started SEARCH and continues to lead it, often tells young people that what God wants for you is so much better than what you want for yourself. He explains they need to listen to God, think of others, and get out of their comfort zone. This retreat was led by Mildred Juarez, a graduate from the Oblate’s scholarship program, where she got her psychology degree. Mildred relays that one attendee told her that she had felt lonely her whole life and had been searching for God. This retreat made her realize that God is with her and has always been with her.

Retreatants are given the chance to go to confession and communion after they have listened to testimonials about changed lives and the importance of the God-centered life.

Mildred also says having psychology services available in a spiritual setting is helpful to attendees that struggle with wounds, suicidal thoughts, or other issues that they just have

never had an outlet to speak about. Many attendees discover that are surrounded by people going through or having been through the same things they are dealing with and that helps them open up during the retreat.



Near the end of the retreat attendees are given the chance to share their testimony and often through tears offer apologies and ask their family and others for forgiveness. They go on to commit to helping others in the same way they have been helped.

Retreatants often stay connected with the church by helping with future SEARCH retreats and getting involved in other ministries at the church. Many of the services offered through the parish including the scholarship program, psychology sessions, medical services, food distribution, roof replacement, various educational classes were either started by or are now continued by young people who went to one of the 19 previous SEARCH retreats since 2012.



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## *“Just as the Oblates do.”*

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Nadia Medina is a 25-year-old nurse who was aided by the Oblate's scholarship program. She works in a general hospital in the pediatric care unit. She says she loves working with children and especially babies. She says she likes to explain things to the children in a caring and truthful way instead of saying “this is not going to hurt” or “everything is going to be okay”.

Nadia says by doing so children learn to trust medical personnel.

While some people have the opposite experience, Nadia says that becoming a nurse has been so much better than she was expecting. She explains her work doesn't even feel like a job. At first, she was treated like a novice and not given much consideration, but after only a few months, she became accepted and respected for her care and capabilities.

Nadia recalls a girl who came in bleeding and in a lot of pain from what Nadia suspected was a botched abortion. Through the course of the evaluation, the doctors determined they needed to do a hysterectomy. Nadia recalls feeling deep remorse because she realized this poor girl would never be a mother. Nadia came to realize she cannot become so personally connected to people so as to cause her own mental health to be compromised. Now she thinks of the saying “there are no roses without thorns”.





Nadia has been connected with the Oblate parish for 8 years attending and serving in SEARCH retreats. Now she has joined the parish medical assistance program as a service to give back to the community. She will be visiting people in their homes and providing personal care that goes beyond medical care and shows her love for God. Nadia says she does not have to take on the sorrows of people to be the hands that clean and the feet that travel to the most abandoned people just as the Oblates do.