

Dear Choir members,

As you know, I have spent many enjoyable months in the last four years in San Antonio Palopó, a village on the edge of Lake Atitlan. I have come to love the environment, made many friends and care deeply for them, especially the children. Your contributions have made such a difference to this community.

Two weeks ago, you may have heard that Volcan Pacaya, near Antigua, exploded and that ash closed the Guatemala airport for 5 days and that Hurricane Agatha caused havoc in Central America.

Well, it is a much bigger story. Since Monday emails and phone calls have been going back and forth to and from friends in San Antonio and Santa Catarina, and then pictures, some of which I will send. The devastation is real. San Antonio is completely isolated except by boat. Food and wood are in short supply, the water system is practically non-existent. Medicines, clothing, bedding etc are all in great demand. The schools are closed. Both have been declared unsafe to use as shelter. They are still looking for a woman and child and there are 19 dead in San Antonio, probably the hardest hit in all of Guatemala. Neighbouring Santa Catarina lost at least 25 homes and all the people are staying in the school. Two people have died. And there is a very real fear of more rain and more devastation.

I am writing to ask for your prayers for and, if possible, contributions for these villages.

We are and will be working with, and have great trust in, a team in San Antonio that will decide where best to use any funds we send them. We also have a project for which we have hired 2 Mayan women with whom we will be working to identify urgent needs. Our goal is to have funds go where they will benefit the most people with no administration fee.

Please look at the ICO website: [www.innovativecommunities.org](http://www.innovativecommunities.org)

Know that what is happening is happening to the people you have given so much to support in the last few years and we are all very connected – we couldn't have gone there without you. So please take a moment to light a candle for Guatemala. And if you can, write a cheque made out to ICO FOUNDATION\* (flood relief on memo line) and mail it to my address: 1081 Holmes St, Duncan, BC, V9L2C9...or...donate on line on the website.

Any amount however large or small will be deeply appreciated and a charitable tax receipt will be issued.

Should you want more information, please write to or phone me (250-748-4178).

Warmest regards, Kathy