

Greetings, Mr. Walker:

From the news reports, I'm sure you're already aware of tropical storm Stan which struck Guatemala a few days ago. The worst damage to infrastructure occurred along the south coast in the provinces of Escuintla, Retalhuleu and Santa Rosa. The greatest loss of life took place to the east in the province of Sololá, especially in the city of Santiago Atitlán, where some 500 people died. Other areas suffering major damage are Quetzaltenango and San Marcos. The highway between Quetzaltenango and San Marcos is blocked at the half-way point by an avalanche of earth and rock. The route from Guatemala City to Quetzaltenango is also impassable because of the collapse of a bridge, leaving the region completely cut off from the outside. Likewise, the highway from Quetzaltenango to the south coast is closed by several landslides.

In spite of all this, the members are basically unharmed. In the Quetzaltenango congregation only one family had to be evacuated from their home in a nearby town because of rising floodwaters. They are now staying with relatives and escaped safe and sound.

Our hope is that the highways will have been cleared by the time everyone has to leave for the Feast. The Feast site itself (in Antigua) is perfectly intact, having suffered no damage whatsoever. For this we are extremely thankful. I am asking that you pass along this information to congregations in the United States and around the world so everybody can be aware of our situation – especially so that those traveling to Guatemala for the Feast from other countries can rest assured that all is in perfect order at the Feast site.

Thank you very much,

Luis Mundo