

Dear friends,

Attached please find a Thank You letter from Children's Village Boys town for the Christmas gifts delivered this Christmas season to the kids sheltered there. Most of the children are adolescents like we were in the 60s and it is always a pleasure to bring them some joy during the Christmas season. The kids find the gifts on Christmas morning and for many of them this is the first time they receive Christmas gifts.

Also, I included two pictures from the Toy Distribution at Centro Hispano Catolico Day Care Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh on January 8th, 2013. Every year we remember our Reyes Magos tradition by bringing toys to around 300 pre-school children that attend this Day Care that bears the name of our beloved Msgr. Walsh. These kids are from 3 to 5 years old, a beautiful and joyful age group!

As I know many of you are grandparents as well, I thought you would like to share in the joy that these events bring to all these children thanks to your contributions. Thanks for your continued support we are able to do this every year.

Love,
Carmencita Romanach

***The official Pedro Pan Newsletter of Operation Pedro Pan
Group Inc.***

OPERATION PEDRO PAN GROUP, INC. (OPPG)

A National Charitable Organization

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February 6, 2013

Pedro Pan News



Jorge and Peggy Guarch

The Board of Directors of Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc.
has decided to establish a Memorial Scholarship in honor of
Jorge and Peggy Guarch

at Immaculata/LaSalle High School
on January 26th, 2013

Both Peggy and Jorge "George" Guarch will be fondly remembered by every
Pedro Pan kid.

We will never forget their generosity and love at our time of need.

If you wish to make a special contribution to this Memorial Scholarship you
can do so

by mailing a check to OPPG with a note stating in the memo:
Jorge and Peggy Memorial Scholarship

The following is a note from daughter Lynn Guarch Pardo about her parents:

Jorge Manuel Guarch (1920-1991), a native of Antilla, Oriente, Cuba, attended high school in Berea, Kentucky, after which he returned to Cuba where he met Peggy Lou Hind (1924-2011). Peggy had moved to nearby Nicaro, Cuba from Hot Springs, Montana at the age of 18. Jorge and Peggy married and lived in Cuba until 1947, when they moved to Miami, Florida, spending nearly a half-century together, and raising their two children, Lynn and Jorge Jr.

The Guarch family never lost their love for Cuba or its people, and from 1960 to 1962, together they played an important role in Operation Pedro Pan, as Jorge met the flights at the airport and Peggy cared for many of the children as guests in her own home.

Jorge, better known as "George", was an employee of the Catholic Welfare Bureau, responsible for receiving the unaccompanied Cuban children arriving daily at Miami's airport, during the exodus of over 14,000 children being sent by their parents to the United States to avoid Communist indoctrination. George is fondly remembered for calming the thousands of frightened children by offering candy and gum to the new arrivals. As he drove the children to the various camps and homes, he encouraged them to honor their parents by being valiant and proud representatives of their Cuban homeland. As the years passed, and George watched the Pedro Pan children grow into strong, responsible men and women, he marveled at their resilience, and felt great pride in their strength of character.

Peggy, having been placed in the Montana State Orphans Home after the death of her mother when she was not quite two years of age, could relate to the plight of the children arriving in a strange country without their parents. She was a compassionate, loving, and comforting

figure to many Pedro Pan children who were given their first taste of food in the United States at her table.

Jorge and Peggy felt fortunate to have been given a special role in the exodus of the children of Pedro Pan. They were immensely proud of the unique fellowship that is shared by the now-adult Pedro Pan, and the help that Operation Pedro Pan Group has given, and continues to give, to the less fortunate children in our community.

(Their children are both graduates of Immaculata-La Salle High School. Lynn is a member of the class of 1973, and Jorge Jr. a member of the class of 1977.)



Bishop Octavio Cisneros, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Miami, Fl

Last January 27th, 2013 we had the pleasure to attend Mass celebrated by Bishop
Octavio Cisneros
at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Miami Beach, Fl

Bishop Cisneros is Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn since 2006.
He proudly stated at the beginning of Mass that he was born in Cuba and a was Pedro Pan.

Both Bishop Felipe J. Estevez, Bishop of St. Augustine and Bishop Octavio Cisneros,
Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn,
are part of our Board of Trustees. A real privilege and honor for our Pedro Pan
community
and for our organization, Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc.

REYES MAGOS TOY DISTRIBUTION
Centro Hispano Católico Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh
January 8th, 2013





Stories about Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh

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Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh Defender of Immigrants

By the Most Reverend Felipe J. Estévez
Bishop of St. Augustine, Florida

June 2011

I happen to receive once in a while angry and hateful letters complaining about the Church's position on immigration, specifically the positions of the U.S. Bishops. These letters go out of their way to express with anger how illegal immigrants are a nuisance to our country, and how we should all be sending them back to their homeland.

These are Christians who seem to forget the words of Jesus: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." When I think of Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh, I think that he would experience sadness in reading those letters for he was such a defender of immigrants and refugees.

As one of the fourteen thousand Pedro Pan's boys and girls, I received a waiver visa to come to Miami alone. Years after I would learn that it was a secret operation rescuing thousands of Cuban teens and children from the emergence of a communist take-over in Cuba.

This initiative was the vision and the hard work of the then Archbishop of Miami the Most Reverend Coleman F. Carroll. Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh, director of Catholic Charities, his staff and hundreds of volunteers provided shelter, food and a familiar environment at our arrival in the United States.

I feel great gratitude for what I received upon my arrival, including learning a new language and receiving a Catholic education. My parents and siblings were able to arrive in the United States within one year of my own arrival thanks to the support given to all Cuban refugees.

My destiny was to become a priest, just like Monsignor Walsh and even more particularly, I was to be a member of the college of priests with him in

the Archdiocese of Miami since my arrival in Miami this time as priest in 1975.

What I recall of our conversations was the pride he felt that a number of Pedro Pan boys teens had become priests. He would often bring that subject to conversation giving the names of those who became priests with such pride.

As a priest in the Archdiocese of Miami I recall he was most concerned about the life of the community, about the peaceful co-existence among different ethnic communities and races.

As a priest, a particular feature I remember is that he would go to funerals often to pray the rosary for he had a large number of friends in the Miami community. After praying for them, he would go to a corner and listen to confessions of inactive Catholics. He believed in this pastoral practice because he thought many of those who would be reconciled with God, would not go to a Church to regular confessions but the presence and availability of a priest in the context of the funeral of a deceased member of the family was an opportune time.

I recall how available he was to celebrate baptisms and marriages for Pedro Pan members and their families. The Pedro Pan community had in fact become his family.

The last image I have of Msgr. Walsh was when he was on his sick bed at Mercy Hospital. My friends urged me to visit Msgr. Walsh who was dying. When I got to his room, I was very surprised because he looked so well and did not look like a man who was near death. He kept a conversation as he always did and he was eating a vanilla ice cream with great gusto! The impression was deceiving because he died the following day. I have been told that Irish people have a gift for confronting death in the family and I certainly saw this attitude in Msgr. Walsh final hours.

A few days later I found myself concelebrating the Mass of the resurrection at St. Mary Cathedral. I had the definite impression that the hope we were celebrating had already been witnessed by Msgr. Walsh, who in his immediate facing of death was not afraid. He knew that the Master, the risen Lord would be welcoming him home.

Future Events Calendar:

Saturday, February 16, 2013 at 10 AM-Breakfast

Place: Las Vegas Restaurant, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, Fl

Saturday, March 16, 2013 at 10 AM - Picnic

Place: Kendall Indian Hammock Park, 12395 SW 79th Ave, Miami, Fl, Shelter # 1

Saturday, April 20, 2013 at 10 AM - Election Breakfast

Place: Las Vegas Restaurant, 11500 NW 41st. St., Doral, Fl

Saturday, June 15, 2013 at 10 AM - Father's Day Breakfast

Place: TBA

Saturday, July 20, 2013 at 10 AM- Breakfast

Place: TBA

Saturday, August 17, 2013 at 10 AM- Breakfast

Place: TBA

Saturday, September 21, 2013 at 10 AM-Breakfast

Place: TBA

Saturday, October 19, 2013 at 10 AM-Breakfast

Place: TBA

Saturday, November 16, 2013 at 10 AM- Annual Thanksgiving Gala

Place: TBA

Saturday, December 21st, 2013 at 10 AM- Christmas Breakfast

Place: TBA

Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc

A National Charitable Organization of the former Children of Pedro Pan

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