

# Cuba Food Security PowerPoint

Please see the end of PP for the notes that correspond to the slides.



# Cuba PWRDF March 2015

Ven al banquete de Dios  
(Come to the feast of  
God)

















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IGLESIA EPISCOPAL  
SANTA MARIA VIRGEN  
BIENVENIDOS



















# Centro de Elaboración Panes & Primicias

2. Rec...













IGLESIA EPISCOPAL



DE CUBA

Más, buscad primeramente el reino  
de Dios y su justicia y todas las cosas serán  
añadidas. **MATEO 6:33**

DIOCESIS ANGLICANA



Y conoceréis la verdad,  
y la verdad os hará libres.

**JUAN 8:32**

Yo soy el camino,  
la verdad y la vida.

**JUAN 14:6**

**BIENVENID@S**





































**“Come to the Feast”**  
**Notes for Cuba Food Security PowerPoint**  
**By Rev. Greg Smith, PWRDF Diocesan Representative, Diocese of Huron**

**Slide 1:** Instruction page

**Slide 2:** “...the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs of underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing...when you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them and when your herds and flocks have multiplied...then do not exalt yourselves, forgetting the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt...” Deut. 8:7ff

I want to make the Feast my starting point of reflection on our PWRDF delegation visit to Cuban partners in March 2015.

**Slide 3:** We visited a number of communities while we were there. In every one of the communities we found that we were greeted with a remarkable hospitality that always included food -

**Slide 4** - often a veritable banquet feast.

**Slide 5:** The richness of the hospitality soon began to make members of the delegation feel uncomfortable. Here we were visiting communities struggling with the issues of food security and food sovereignty. We could see how little they possessed in comparison with what we had left behind us in Canada. Yet they were sitting us down to a banquet of abundance insisting that we eat.

**Slide 6:** Surely the ones feeding us were the hungry ones; the ones that needed our help. What were they doing serving us? But eventually it became clear. This is exactly what this experience is about.

**Slide 7:** In this development relationship in Food Security we were all being recalled into the Banquet of God.

**Slide 8:** The Cuban partners, in offering us such generous hospitality,

**Slide 9:** were helping us to understand that our partnerships of mutuality with one another, learning how to be in relationship with the Earth and our local environment and to benefit from its goodness: was gathering us into the feast that God has set for all God’s children.

**Slide 10:** Here is the embodiment of what Christ calls us to each time we are gathered and fed at the Eucharistic table.

This is what development work is about; it is what PWRDF is all about.

**Slide 11:** And this is what we saw.

**Slide 12:** The story begins with Christian churches in a nation exploding into the modern era through the upheaval of revolution: People fleeing the churches; the Church as an institution marginalized by the predominant culture; religious people not respected, even persecuted by hostile political forces.

**Slide 13:** It was faithful leadership that brought a revelation to the Cuban Church:

**Slide 14:** ...this is the time to realize that the Church is (in the words of Bishop Griselda) more than the four walls around us and more than an oasis of liturgical, sacramental reassurance for those on the inside.

**Slide 15:** The Church is the instrument of transformation.

**Slide 16:** Partnering with these grassroots leaders in the Cuban Council of Churches, PWRDF has played an important part in accompanying ordinary people in Cuba to literally transform abandoned and useless space towards a new reflection of the abundance, which must have been God's intention in the Garden of Eden.

**Slide 17:** We saw Churches as leaders in learning how to cherish the earth beneath our feet; how to plant and nurture good and appropriate food to feed one another.

**Slide 18:** We saw how this knowledge then spread out in concentric circles, as people witnessed the possibilities.

**Slide 19:** If churches can reclaim the little plots of land around them to produce abundantly, then so too can people in their own homes use the same methods to feed the soil, to plant and to harvest things that would help them to be healthier. Healthier individuals begin to build healthier communities.

**Slide 20:** In producing food, small communities find ways not only to sustain themselves but to flourish. Church communities are beginning to be hubs for transformation.

**Slide 21:** When people are fed, they find they are drawn together to start to consider other issues that are affecting them and that are limiting the well-being God has meant for all. We heard about groups for coping with other community issues like gender roles and gender violence; caring for those who are aged and alone.

**Slide 22:** What began as a priority of the ecumenical body of the Cuban Council of Churches...

**Slide 23:** ...has become a priority of individual church bodies now, such as the Episcopal Church in Cuba.

**Slide 24:** Because of the original initiative, the Episcopal Church in Cuba has now become a leader in Food Security Development. We had the opportunity to visit Episcopal church communities at Itabo,

**Slide 25:** Favorito,

**Slide 26:** Palmira, Cuatro Esquinas,

**Slide 27:** and Habana.

**Slide 28:** We also visited ecumenical partners in Cardenas, Matanzas Province on the northeast coast,

**Slide 29:** the Cienfuegos area along the southern coast,

**Slide 30:** and in the outskirts of Habana.

**Slide 31:** In this latter visit with the project at El Diezmero, San Miguel del Patron, we were escorted across some abandoned land on our way to see the major treasure of the community: a sesame seed oil mill.

**Slide 32:** There in the abandoned field we stumbled upon a tomato plant and a squash plant forcing their way out of the hard and neglected earth...

**Slide 33:** ...as if to remind us all of the Hope that is inherent in this Creation by virtue of the Divine partner who waits for us. It is the same kind of Hope that shone in the eyes of the local folks who proudly brought us to the mill housed in a shed behind one woman's house.

**Slide 34:** This mill – provided by PWRDF along with other partners of the Cuban Council of Churches - is generating income to expand food production in the community and to – one day soon – obtain and cultivate with fruit trees the neglected land where the tomato and squash bore witness.

**Slide 35:** Travelling along with the Canadian delegation were two men who were well acquainted with growing food: one a farmer from Alberta, the other an agronomist from Nova Scotia.

**Slide 36:** With these two along, the dialogue with Cuban partners deepened.

**Slide 37:** The result was that other Canadians in our group – like myself – so often prone to taking the food available to us at home for granted, found we were being transformed in ways mirrored among our hosts. We gained respect and gratitude

for those who work the land on our behalf and who have the important knowledge and instinct for the production of healthy food.

**Slide 38:** We increased in our understanding of the mutual relationship we must keep with the earth beneath us.

**Slide 39:** We made the connection again between our work and our own well-being as we got our hands dirty in the soil, planted seed and harvested the fruits of the earth.

**Slide 40:** We had our eyesight rekindled to see the blessing under which we live. And we relearned – like Biblical Israel returning from exile to the land flowing with milk and honey - that such blessings as we know in this land do not produce privilege for us but rather inspire us to responsibility and connection.

**Slide 41:** As a Diocesan Representative for PWRDF and chairperson for the PWRDF support committee in the Diocese of Huron, I will remain forever grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this experience with our partners in Cuba.

**Slide 42:** I know that my colleagues from the group feel the same. We have received so much.

**Slide 43:** We are energized in promoting the mission of PWRDF at home. We have forged partnership relationships that put grassroots, embodied images to the projects we talk about as we stand before the people in our churches.

**Slide 44:** We have been convicted by what we have seen, that the accompaniment model of development is the model that reflects the action of God and the followers of Jesus. We have been changed by our partners for life in our own backyards. We have tasted the rich banquet that God puts before us, the children of God, and we are ready to share.

**Slide 45 (end slide):** It is with deep gratitude that I am able to share this story with the Board of PWRDF and to witness to you personally of the important investment you have made for our organization.

Ven, ven al banquete! Ven a la fiesta de Dios! (Come to the banquet! Come to God's feast!)