

Father Emilio Cook declared as "Favorite Son of Flores"

August 9, 2022



Authorities of the Villa de San Antonio hand over the keys to Father Emilio Cook with the well deserved recognition as "The Favorite Son of Flores".

Flores, Villa San Antonio, Comayagua. In the midst of a great crowd and during the celebration of its patron saint, the American Catholic priest, Emilio Cook, was declared "The Favorite Son of Flores".

The priest is considered an apostle of education in Honduras, where he has founded several educational centers, boarding schools for young people and support for poor and abandoned children.

Father Emilio for many years has preached and educated the children of Honduras, 40 of them in the community of Flores, where he founded the "Maximilian Kolbe" secondary education institute and a boarding school to help infants and young people with limited economic resources.

"The community of Flores, through the Patron Saint Celebration Committee, and with the support and authority of the mayor's office of Villa de San Antonio, honor the enormous social and educational work carried out by our founder Emilio Cook," highlights an official statement of the leaders of the community.

"Providing him a beautiful tribute for his legacy of love and service given to this great village of Flores, giving him an esteemed recognition during the celebration of our patron saint in 2022, and officially naming him as Flores' Favorite Son", the statement said.



Father Emilio Cook appreciates the tribute paid to him for his great contribution to education and to those most in need.

The pilgrimage of Father Emilio Cook began in Salina County, Kansas, United States, where he came into the world on September 30, 1939. From that place he arrived in the city of Juticalpa, Olancho, in 1970, to give great hope to thousands of boys and girls.

A great part of Father Cook's childhood was formed by religious training and he developed a desire to travel in the United States and to other regions of the world, as well as to fear God and act with moral values, with justice, honesty and for the common welfare.

For a few weeks after arriving in Honduras Father Emilio Cook, a member of the Franciscan order, remained in the Prelature of Juticalpa, but then Bishop Nicolás D'Antonio recommended that he first explore the immense Olancho territory and then choose the place where he would carry out his pastoral mission in favor of the poor, above all the children and the helpless youth who were without possibilities of change.

This is how the priest decided to locate himself in the municipality of Gualaco, a mountainous, rural place isolated from the rest of the department of Olancho and located 110 kilometers east of the city of Juticalpa, where he founded a boarding school for boys, another for girls and a secondary school.

The school was named doctor "Francisco Bertrand", in honor of a former Honduran president and over time, Father Emilio arranged for international aid, especially from the United States, that allowed him to expand the coverage of his humanitarian aid to the population and provided the opportunity of scholarships to more young people from all over Olancho and the rest of the country.



In his 52-year pilgrimage, Father Emilio Cook has founded educational centers and boarding schools in Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Africa.

More boarding schools and colleges opened in Tegucigalpa, Comayagua, Yoro and Colón, while he helped high school graduates continue their university studies, some with soft loans and others with 100 percent scholarships.

Thanks to the magnificent humanitarian action of Father Emilio Cook, thousands of young Hondurans were able to complete their high school and university studies and their lives have changed, while they work in the advancement and development of Honduras.

Founding of APUFRAM

The Franciscan People's Association of Girls and Boys (APUFRAM), is a non-profit, secular, apolitical institution, whose objective and sole purpose is to improve the quality of life and promote human development, through comprehensive education in those sectors of Honduras

with fewer opportunities. The same objectives, starting in 2002, were extended to the Dominican Republic and then to the African continent.

APUFRAM has several educational centers in different areas of the country. Attached to educational centers it has homes for girls, boys, and single mothers. Amid the gathering of its members, the philanthropic-Catholic oriented -educational institution celebrated its 40th anniversary in Flores, Department of Comayagua, where it now has its headquarters.

(Francisco Sevilla)



The Catholic priest received gifts and a scroll for his 40 years of social service in Flores, Comayagua.