



THE BROTHERHOODS OF SALAMÁ, BAJA VERAPAZ

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THE BROTHERHOODS OF *SALAMÁ*, *BAJA VERAPAZ*

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Resumen

Las cofradías y hermandades han sido pilares fundamentales para la difusión y preservación del catolicismo a lo largo y ancho de Guatemala. Estas instituciones llegaron al país en el siglo XVI, paralelas a la evangelización llevada a cabo por misioneros de varias órdenes religiosas, entre ellos los dominicos que se asentaron en las Verapaces. En Salamá, cabecera departamental de Baja Verapaz, la religiosidad católica ocupa un lugar preponderante dentro del ideario de sus habitantes, razón por la cual, durante la época hispana, surgieron cofradías que contribuyeron al ornato del actual templo parroquial, contando con fuertes capitales, en dinero y ganado. A lo largo del siglo XIX, y como producto de los cambios sociales y culturales de la época, las cofradías se extinguieron, dando origen a inicios del siglo XX, a hermandades, dedicadas especialmente a la veneración a las imágenes de Pasión. Estas instituciones no han escapado a las transformaciones propias de los tiempos modernos. Sin embargo, a pesar de los sube y baja, en el presente existen tres hermandades, dos de ellas de reciente fundación, que entre sus diversas funciones contribuyen a mantener las expresiones de fe y devoción, en una comunidad cristiana; y de la cual participan hombres y mujeres, de todas las edades.

Palabras claves: cofradías, hermandades, Salamá, imágenes, fe, devoción.

Abstract

The confraternities and brotherhoods have been fundamental pillars for the diffusion and preservation of the Catholicism throughout Guatemala. These institutions came to the country in the sixteenth century, parallel to the evangelization carried out by missionaries of various religious orders, among them the Dominicans who settled in the *Verapaces*. In *Salamá*, capital town of *Baja Verapaz*, the catholic religion occupies a leading place within the ideology of its population, which is why during the Hispanic era, there were confraternities that contributed to the beautification of the parish church with significant capital that included money and cattle. During the 19th century, as a result of the social and cultural changes of that time, the confraternities gradually extinguished and at the beginning of the 20th century the brotherhoods were created, especially dedicated to worship the Passion images. These institutions have not escaped the transformations of modern times. However, despite the ups and downs, there are currently three brotherhoods, two of them recently founded that among their different duties, they contribute to keep the expressions of faith and devotion in a Christian community in which men and women of all ages are involved.

Key words: confraternities, brotherhoods, *Salamá*, images, faith, devotion.

Introduction

Salamá, the capital town of Baja Verapaz, is a community that treasures a variety of customs and traditions, many of them related to religious practices, where Catholicism plays an important role. During the Hispanic era there were several confraternities and some of them were successful and financed most of the altarpieces and images that are preserved in the parish church.

Over the years, the old confraternities disappeared and were replaced by others at the beginning of the twentieth century, which have the Child God as their guardian, having an important role during the period following Christmas. On the other hand, in some rural areas of the municipality there are still brotherhoods, also called *mayordomías*, whose main purpose is to celebrate the patron saint of the community or any other important religious tradition in the community.

However, in the town of *Salamá*, already in the twenty-first century some brotherhoods arose, that inherited the religious traditions of their ancestors and that have among their diverse commands to plan and to execute the activities with which the Passion and death of Jesus Christ is commemorated, during the Lent and Holy Week, liturgical cycle that is respected greatly in the community.

This article is a brief outline of the three brotherhoods that have presence in the town of *Salamá*, being them in order of antiquity: *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, *Siervos de Jesucristo* and *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, which has its headquarters in a neighborhood of the city.

The Brotherhoods in Guatemala

In terms of religion, the brotherhood is an organization made up of a group of people whose purpose is to worship a specific image, whether of Christ, the Virgin Mary or the saints. In Guatemala's situation, they are part of the traditional religiosity. In general, it tends to be seen as synonymous to confraternity and brotherhood, however, they have certain differences, one of them being that for the latter to function, it must have statutes, i.e. a regulation:

"This must be given by the archbishop, a bishop or other competent authority" (Chajón, 2015).

Luis Maldonado, refers that both brotherhoods and corporations (brotherhoods), reached their midpoint in European society, especially in Spain and Germany in the thirteenth century, the second ones having more religious purposes than the first ones, which do it for professional interests. They both enjoyed the support of the Catholic Church for several reasons, including the following: "The Church supports them with such warmth to hide, according to some, the fight between social classes, as well as to place in a seed of hope and transformation in the heart of the Church, while not denying it" (Maldonado, 1979, p. 138).

One of the things that distinguished the confraternities and brotherhoods was social assistance, since they had the commitment to establish institutions of public charity, as well as to help the needy, sick, elderly or disabled members of the confraternity and brotherhood. and they also had to guarantee a burial in Christian soil for their members.

The confraternities and brotherhoods arrived in Guatemala after the Spanish conquest, although the terms used to be confused, the last of the colonial chroniclers, Domingo Juarros, who wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century, refers that the first confraternity that emerged in Guatemala was the *Inmaculada Concepción*, which is known since 1537, followed by the *Santa Vera Cruz* in 1533 and *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* in 1559 (Juarros, 1999).

Apparently the first confraternities and brotherhoods were integrated by Spanish and their descendants; as well as by people belonging to the high ecclesiastical hierarchy: " *La Venerable Congregación de San Pedro* is, without a doubt, the most respectable Brotherhood of this metropolis, because its Abbot is regularly the Archbishop, as well as because its members are, or ecclesiastical people, or subjects of the first nobility of the city" (Juarros, 1999, 164-165).

Most of the existing brotherhoods in Guatemala have as their main purpose the veneration of the images of Passion, corresponding to the cycles of Lent and Holy Week. However, some of the parishes participate in other activities within the parish on different dates throughout the year, and others have the tradition of visiting towns when they are celebrating or commemorating some important event, for example: anniversaries of foundation, devotion of the image or erection of the parish.

Former confraternities and brotherhoods of Salamá

In the case of *Salamá*, it is known that the region was founded by the Dominicans in the second half of the sixteenth century, it was ecclesiastically part of *Curato de Rabinal*, and later became an independent one, being in charge of the sugar mill, today town of *San Jerónimo*, as well as a ranchería called *San Miguelito*, which is currently *San Miguel Chicaj*. As was usual in colonial towns, several confraternities were founded in *Salamá*, the most frequent being those of the *Santisimo Sacramento*, *Ánimas*, *San Mateo* (patron saint of the community) and *Santa Rosa* (Montés, 1977).

The confraternities of *Salamá* reached prosperity, among their assets they had livestock and sponsored the creation of altarpieces and images, which can still be appreciated in the local parish church. As it used to be the case, also in *Salamá* the terms “confraternities” and “brotherhoods” were confused. According to Aníbal Chajón, by 1807 the following brotherhoods were mentioned: *Jesús Nazareno*, *Nuestra Señora de Dolores*, and *de San José*, all with the addition of “ladinos”; as well as the more recently created *Señor de Esquipulas*, also with mestizos, and *Virgen del Patrocinio* y and also the brotherhood of *La Caridad*, established by Fray Carlos Cadena that took care of the sick, and the brotherhood of *Señor de Esquipulas* that was composed of indigenous people (Chajón, Salamá, *una ciudad antañona*, 2015).



Figure 1. Image of *San Mateo*, patron saint of Salamá, who was part of the now extinct confraternity with the same name. Photo by Deyvid Molina.

During the Hispanic period, there was another institution known as *guachival*, which consisted of a community commitment assumed by an indigenous family to take charge of a Christian image, which they were supposed to serve for a certain period of time. Unlike the confraternities and brotherhoods, within the *guachivales* there were no “*mayordomos*”, they did not keep records of their goods, incomes and outgoings and the only remnant of devotion consisted of paid masses. For the ethnographer Santiago Montés, these institutions were a way of preserving the ancient indigenous beliefs:

Indigenous religiosity found its roots in all ritual forms and is especially evident in the festive ones, not only in the way of celebrating processions and ceremonies, but more deeply in the contents of belief and moral action reflected in the so-called “superstitions” and “abuses”, establishing a stronghold of the autonomy of the indigenous people (Montés, 1977, p. 22).

Regarding religion, the town of Salamá suffered the consequences of the anticlericalism from the nineteenth century of the liberal regimes, up to the point that by the beginning of the next century it had no parish priest. According to traditional stories at that time it was the confraternities and brotherhoods that kept the faith among the population, however, most of them disappeared, leaving only the one of the patron saints, San Mateo, which later would give rise to one of Passion. According to traditional stories at that time it was the confraternities and brotherhoods that kept the faith among the population, however, most of them disappeared, leaving only the one of the patron saints, San Mateo, which later would give rise to one of Passion. There are other possible reasons why the confraternities were extinguished in *Salamá* for example the reduction of the indigenous population; the decrease of the population because of the illnesses and epidemics that plagued the country and consequently left the survivors without economic resources. As a remarkable fact, when the old colonial confraternities disappeared, others emerged, which are the ones that are still active today, and whose patron saint is the Child God, being them: Dulce Nombre, de la Virgen and San José.

There was a brotherhood of *Jesús Nazareno* in the early 1920s, which was in charge of organizing Holy Week activities (Ramos, 1998, p. 1). In 1926, the idea of having an image of a Buried Lord in the town was considered so the renowned sculptor Julio Dubois was contacted to have the sculpture made. The sculpture was blessed on April 8, 1927, and it was placed in the temple of *El Calvario* (Ramos, 1998, p. 5). and currently this image is known as “*Cristo Yacente de la Misericordia*” (Recumbent Christ of Mercy).

In 1959, the brotherhood of the *Señor Sepultado* was founded, and Benjamín Ramos San José was named president, who was in charge of the organization for 25 years. The last president of this institution was Clemente García, who handed over the position in 1995 when

then parish priest Yovanni Morán decided to dissolve the brotherhood and set it up in coordination, appointing Mr. Alberto Deonísio as the person in charge (Ramos, 1998, pp. 3-7). The former brotherhood of *El Señor Sepultado* was responsible for coordinating the activities of Lent and Holy Week, as well as the patron saint fair in honor of San Mateo, in September (Cruz, 2015). This brotherhood disappeared at the end of the 1990's

Most likely, according to the historian Gladys Barrios, the history of this brotherhood goes back to the old confraternity of San Mateo: “... in the temple several [brotherhoods] were created with the one of the “Glorioso Apóstol San Mateo”, today the brotherhood of the “Señor Sepultado” (Barrios, 1991, p. 44). It is certain that this confraternity disappeared like the rest due to the reforms of the liberal governments, which lashed out against the Catholic Church. It is also believed that in Salamá these institutions disappeared when they ran out of economic resources: “Apparently the confraternities disappeared because they did not have the necessary funds for their maintenance, and the images were handed over to the parish” (Cruz, 2015).



Figure 2. Procession of Good Friday approximately in the 1950s, where the participation of that time's brotherhood stands out. Courtesy photograph by Photo Alex.

There are currently three brotherhoods in the town of **Salamá**, two of which function in the parish church and have an outstanding participation in the Lent and Holy Week activities: *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores* and *Siervos de Jesucristo*.

The most recent one is the one founded in the chapel of the *Hacienda La Virgen*, called *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*. There is also talk of another known as the Brotherhood of *Las Palmas*, however, some interviewees stated that it does not function as a brotherhood whose only activity is to carry the image of Jesus de las Palmas, which leaves from a local house during Palm Sunday (Sanabria, 2015).

Below we provide some information about the three existing brotherhoods in the town of *Salamá*, noting that these institutions in the community are open, i.e. they accept as members all those people who have the will to wish to join them.

1. Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores

It is the one of the oldest of the current brotherhoods existing in *Salamá*, although the date of creation is not known yet, having news of it already in the 1920s. In this regard, Cristina Peláez, secretary of this brotherhood, stated the following:

There have been groups in the parish, but the people who have been in charge of taking the minutes have already passed away, I do not know when it was founded, I have an aunt who was president and she told me that at that time she had a book of minutes, however, it disappeared when the board of directors changed. I have more than 55 years of experience of doing this (Peláez, 2015).

It is possible that the current brotherhood of Dolores is the one referred to by Anibal Chajon (2015) and that it is mentioned in an inventory from the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, it requires archival studies to confirm this point. Donald Sanabria (2016) mentions that the background of the current brotherhood goes back to other institutions that existed in the community, such as: confraternity of Dolores, brotherhood of *Señor Sepultado* and *Virgen of Dolores*; and *Virgen de Dolores* Association (Sanabria, 2017).

Regarding the organization of the brotherhood, it is integrated by a president, a position that Etelvina de García has held for several years, a secretary, a treasurer and members of the board and recently the brotherhood is integrated by three different groups: ladies, gentlemen and children. are also groups and individuals who collaborate with the brotherhood of Dolores, as Cristina Peláez mentioned:

There are groups that approach us to help, and we approach them. There are people who already have a tradition of helping us on Good Friday with the float of the brotherhood. We collaborate with all the groups, and wherever they call us we are there. We lend images, floats, tunics to those who ask for them (Peláez, 2015).

Everyone who has the desire to participate and collaborate in the different activities organized by the brotherhood throughout the year is welcome since there are no restrictions, as in the case of Donald Sanabria, who commented: “There are people who approach us and ask us ‘what do you want to do? How can we help you?’” (Sanabria, 2015).



Figure 3. Banner from the brotherhood of *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*. Courtesy photograph by Donald Sanabria.

During the whole year, the Brotherhood of *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, participates in different activities such as the following:

Palm Sunday	Around three in the afternoon, they organize the procession of the children with the image of Jesus of Nazareth, which leaves the parish church and goes through the streets and avenues of Salamá.
Holy Monday	At three in the afternoon, there is a children's procession of the Holy Burial through some streets of Salamá.
Good Friday	They participate in the different processions that take place during that day as well as other religious services.
Holy Saturday	They are in charge of organizing the Our Lady of Solitude procession, with the images of the Virgin Mary, St. John and St. Mary Magdalene, which leaves the parish church at about four in the afternoon.
Easter Sunday	They are in charge of the realization of the children's procession of the Risen Lord.
Month of December	The members of the Brotherhood of <i>Nuestra Señora de los Dolores</i> are in charge of placing the nativity scene in the parish church of Salamá.

Until not so long ago, the Brotherhood of Dolores supported the parish group called *Devotas de María* in making the floats where the image of the Virgin Mary was carried in a procession on May. They were also in charge of organizing the activities of December 12th in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe where the children's procession

was a special activity in which children dressed in costumes that imitated the traditional clothing used by the Guatemalan indigenous people. The last procession that was organized by the brotherhood was in 2015.

The brotherhood's members have been involved in activities outside of Salamá over the years, such as processions and vigils in Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, San Cristóbal Verapaz and San Pedro Carchá, Alta Verapaz, and San Juan Sacatepéquez, Guatemala.

Previously, the members of the Brotherhood of *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, did not have a specific clothing to wear during their different activities, the usual clothing was a white blouse and a black skirt sometimes with pants, for the Good Friday night activities, they wore a black skirt and jacket and a white blouse. Nowadays they have a different uniform, that consists of:

- Ladies: a white and cream blouse, black skirt and a cream mantilla veil. For mourning and condolence activities: a suit, mantilla veil and black gloves.
- Gentlemen: two tunics, a cream and a black one, which are used according to the event, combined with a cape, a belt and a black capirote.



Figure 4. Members of the Brotherhood of *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores* wearing their different uniforms that make them stand out from the rest. Courtesy photograph by Donald Sanabria.

On both ladies' and gentlemen's uniforms, it is essential to wear the pectoral cross or medal and the emblems that identify the brotherhood.

The Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores is in charge of the care of the ancient images of the Buried Lord, the Virgin of Solitude (which according to Donald Sanabria dates back to 1775); the Lady of Solitude, St. John, St. Mary Magdalene and those images that are part of the children's processions. They also store costumes and other belongings. According to participants who were interviewed, there are always faithful people who donate the costumes that the Virgin will wear in the processions during the year and the ornaments for the floats that will carry the images:

When we knock on doors and thank God the people help us There are people whose tradition consists in providing corduroy or velvet for the elaboration of the Virgin's costumes.



Figure 5. Image of the Lady of Solitude, which is part of the patrimony of the brotherhood that bears the same name. Photo by Deyvid Molina.

Sometimes people also give us the lilies to ornament the floats; people always help us (Peláez, 2015).

2. Brotherhood Siervos de Jesucristo

In 2011 the Brotherhood of *Siervos de Jesucristo* was created, not as a brotherhood but as another group within the parish of *San Mateo Apóstol* with Juan Francisco Ortiz Hernández as parish priest at that time. They created a board of members with a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and three members. It was in 2013, when Igor Raúl Gigena Aparicio, the new parish priest, held a talk in which all the members discussed how they were operating, and he gave the authorization to use the name of brotherhood. Nowadays, the brotherhood has the custody and protection of the images of the Passion (Jesus of Nazareth of Forgiveness, Jesus of Nazareth of Santa Clara, the Buried Lord and the Risen Lord).



Figure 6. Banner of the Brotherhood Siervos de Jesucristo. Photo by Deyvid Molina.

In the early 2010s, Herbin Cruz, along with five *cucuruchos* who had belonged to the old brotherhood of the *Señor Sepultado*, brought a group of young people together to create the new organization that would later become known as *Siervos de Jesucristo*. In 2014, already as a brotherhood, they assumed important roles within the parish of San Mateo and they began to actively participate in the celebrations of Lent and Holy Week, as well as in other celebrations to which they were invited.

The Brotherhood is currently composed of children, youth and adults, with approximately 50 members, and is working on the development of its rules based on three main points: 1) Respect for life; 2) A sacramental life; and 3) Approach to God through images.

The members of the Brotherhood *Siervos de Jesucristo* participate in several activities in Salamá, such as the following:

-On Holy Tuesday, the brotherhood is in charge of the vigil of the images of the Passion and the elaboration of the huerto, which take place in the parish church of Salamá.

-On Good Friday, this brotherhood participates in three events that take place on that day: the capture of Jesus the Nazarene and of the Recumbent Christ of Mercy, as well as other activities in the parish church.

-In June, during the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is changeable, the brotherhood collaborates with these activities that are held by the parish church, and on some occasions a procession has been held with the invocation of Christ.

-Last Sunday of November, feast of Christ the King: this is one of the newest celebrations that take place in Salamá, since it began to be held in 2013. On that day, the image of the Buried Lord is paraded in a solemn procession through the main streets and avenues of the town.

Like the Brotherhood of *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, the *Siervos de Jesucristo* members also participate outside the town, in activities with other religious organizations, especially in the region of the Verapaces, *in Salamá*, where they have been making the float of the Buried Lord for several years with the support of



Figure 7-Molina-HSalama, Members of the Brotherhood *Siervos de Jesucristo*. Courtesy photograph by Mayck Pivara



Figure 8. Participation of the Brotherhood Siervos de Jesucristo in an activity in Cobán, Alta Verapaz.
Photo by Brotherhood of Siervos de Jesucristo

young people and people who collaborate with materials and with their labor.

The Brotherhood *Siervos de Jesucristo* is the keeper of the images of a) Jesus the Nazarene of Santa Clara, known as of the indigenous people, which is very similar to Jesus of Candelaria in Guatemala City; b) Jesus the Nazarene of Forgiveness, or of the “ blancos”; both apparently colonial carvings; c) the Recumbent Christ of Mercy, by Julio Dubois, from the twentieth century; and the Risen Jesus, which is paraded on the morning of Easter Sunday. As well as other items related to the images in their charge.

The future of the Brotherhood Siervos de Jesucristo is encouraging, since many people, mostly young people are approaching it to either be part of it or to help. They are also present in various traditional religious activities outside the parish, which is why Herbin Cruz defines it as “a youth movement to rescue religious traditions” (Cruz, 2015).

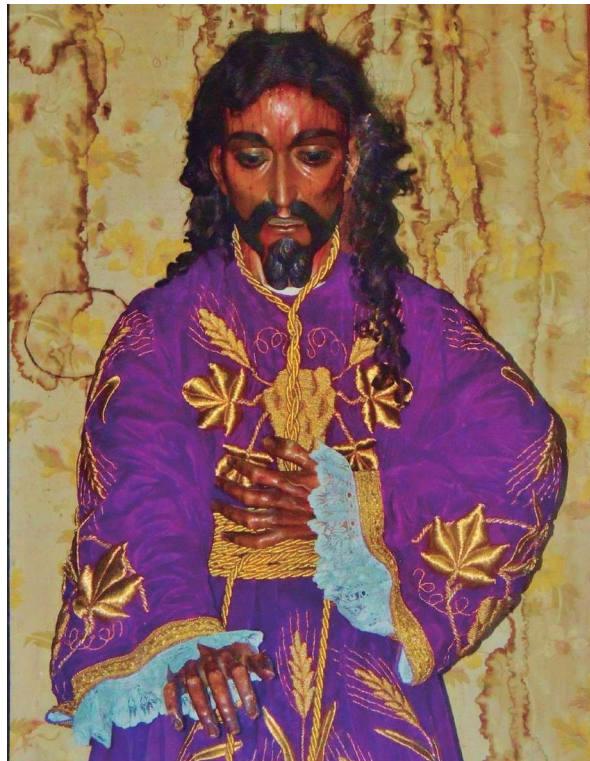


Figure 9. Image of Jesus Nazarene of Santa Clara, which is in the care of the Brotherhood *Siervos de Jesucristo*. Photo by Deyvid Molina.



Figure 10. The Procession of the Buried Lord is part of the activities that the Brotherhood of the Siervos de Jesucristo schedules each year.
Photo by Deyvid Molina.

3. Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario

At the entrance to Salamá, driving from Guatemala City through the *El Rancho* Road, you will find the Hacienda La Virgen neighborhood, which according to local tradition, is named after the fact that the Dominicans raised livestock that belonged to the heritage of the extinct confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Rosario. Like all the neighborhoods of Salamá, this brotherhood has its chapel that in 2016 began the process to become a quasi-parish, which is dedicated to the Virgin of the Rosary.

Since the late 1980s, the patron saint festivities of the Hacienda la Virgen neighborhood that are held every year in October, started to gain popularity, firstly due to the donation of the image of the Virgin of the Rosary by Carlos Fernández Medina, the 23rd of October of 1988, and secondly, due to the mini fair that was established in close by the neighborhood's chapel. All these activities were coordinated by a local committee in which Mr. Alberto Deonisio, current president of the brotherhood, was a member.

For more than 20 years the group constituted as a Catholic Committee, worked in the organization of the activities of the neighborhood fair, however, in 2013, there were problems between some of its members, which caused the involvement of the new parish priest of Salamá, Igor Gigena, who explained the following:

That the committees no longer existed, that they were already out of date and that we should reorganize our committee, and so we did, new people from the neighborhood joined. On July 28, 2013 was not named as a committee, but as the Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario, because the Virgin of the Rosary is in the parish church and it is the one we celebrate and make her feast in October (Yat, 2015).

The parish priest stated that in order for a new brotherhood to work as such, they should gather the support of at least 25 more people (Rizo, 2015). Currently, the brotherhood is made up of 25 people, however, there are 12 members who are still active. Mr. Alberto Deonisio is the president;

there is a vice-president, secretary, treasurer and pro- treasurer. The rest of the members of the brotherhood work as leaders who are in charge of different commissions. They usually meet in the chapel of the to-dos neighborhood on Thursdays, to discuss topics of interest, including the erection of the chapel in a quasi-parish, and the activities of the neighborhood fair.

When we asked one of the members of the brotherhood about who could be part of it, her response was as follows:

All those people who want to and are interested in participating; and above all the devotion to the Virgin, which is what calls us to work; because although the fair activities are done in order to have an additional source of income for the improvements of the chapel, and now that we are listed as a quasi-parish, we are working to be able to support and maintain ourselves so that we can become a parish (Yat, 2015).



Figure 11. Alberto Deonísio, Amílcar Ramírez and Magaly Yat members of the Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario. Photo by Deyvid Molina.

Lent and Holy Week activities are extremely important for the Hacienda La Virgen neighborhood, even before the brotherhood was established. The members of the brotherhood have been organizing children's processions for years, with the purpose of:

Involve the children so that these customs and traditions can be passed on to them. We have accomplished many things, we have involved many young people as

I have said, sooner or later I am going to disappear, so there must be young people who are learning, they have to continue with all this, we used to do pastorelas at Christmas, and we stopped doing all that because we were faltering and we hope that now that we have more enthusiasm to do activities in order to make our neighborhood well known, because the truth is that before the neighborhood was hardly mentioned, now thanks to God it is well known. We have brought famous artists from the capital city that even in the Salamá fair they have not been brought. We have made a lot of sacrifice, but we have succeeded, with the support of several people. When we started here there was nothing and thanks to the work that everyone has done, and to the people who trusted us, because we had to ask for credit in some places to work the chapel, we are now under a roof (Deonísio, 2015).

Several years ago, some neighbors, including Amílcar Rodríguez, vice-president of the brotherhood, decided to create a squadron of Romans to participate in Holy Week activities:

This is how the idea came up to organize this with three friends, and we started about three weeks before the procession, we got together and started inviting friends, that year we gathered 14 members to perform the activity, we started with the processions and also with the capture of Jesus, and the other year we worked on it for longer, there were 18 young people, mostly children, only the ones who play the big roles are about six or seven people. By the third year we had 23; now this year we are 28 years old and we have been carrying out the crucifixion of Jesus for two years now, after the procession enters, the crucifixion is done here live, as it really is; the Romans are the ones who crucify Jesus. Also thanks to the Brotherhood we have been working for two years with other young people who supported us to decorate the Christmas tree, we are four people, two from outside and don

together to make a tree; the four of us got together thinking about what we were going to do and one of our friends came up with the idea of making it two meters long, which resulted in a tree of six meters and a fraction. We did not have money for the ornament and we started to send notes with the brotherhood seal, and thanks to God people supported us, we were able to buy the tubes for the foliage, they went to bring moss to the village El Carmen, after a series of vicissitudes they took it to the neighborhood, to buy the lights they held a kermesse, the participation of the people was excellent (Rodríguez, 2015).

The main activity in which the Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario works hard is the neighborhood fair, being October 7 the most important day, when the parish celebrates the Virgin of the Rosary, with prayers and novenas leading up to the festivity, concerts, contest queens and rides are part of the entertainment and on the afternoon that day, a replica of the Virgin goes out in procession through the main streets of the neighborhood, where a replica of the Virgin is carried out.

Schedule of activities of the Virgen del Rosario Brotherhood Hacienda La Virgen Neighborhood	
Dates	Activities
January 7th to 15th	Novena to the Christ of Esquipulas.
Every Sunday of Lent at 15:00	Children's procession with the image of Jesus the Nazarene, going through the main streets of the neighborhood, leaving from the neighborhood chapel to the chapel of San Cristobal.
Ash Wednesday and Friday of Lent	Procession of Jesus of Nazareth.
Good Friday	Assistance in the decoration of the Holy Burial float.
May	Month of the Virgin, prayers all month long.
May 10th	Celebration of the anniversary of the Virgin of the Rosary and Mother's Day.
May 30th	Last day of prayers to the Virgin with procession.
June 6th to 14th	Novena in honor of St. Anthony of Padua.
June 22th to 30th	Novena in honor to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
September 29th to October 7th	Celebration of the Virgin of the Rosary, patron saint of the neighborhood.
October 30th	Procession of the Virgin of the Rosary, through the main streets of the neighborhood.
During October	Prayers to the Virgin of the Rosary.
October 20th to 28th	Novena in honor of St. Jude Thaddeus.
December 4th to 12th	Novena in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe.
First and last Sundays of each month	Kermese of fundraising.
Every Thursday	Ordinary meetings in the neighborhood chapel at around seven in the evening.
Every Monday	The chapel is cleaned.



Figure 12. The Brotherhood of Nuestra Señora del Rosario organizes several activities during the Hacienda La Virgen neighborhood fair.

Annually the brotherhood prepares a calendar of the several activities to be held throughout the year, which sometimes may change, but generally is in the following order:

The Brotherhood also collaborates with the activities of the parish of Salamá when it is requested to do so, especially during Good Friday.

Final note

For a community where the Catholic religion is so deeply rooted in its daily life as it is Salamá, the existence of brotherhoods that co-support the faith and the conservation of religious customs is of very important. That is why men and women, eager to collaborate and make a difference in their town, have been given the task of being part of any of the existing brotherhoods, it is remarkable the effort they do to perform each of the tasks assigned to them, even sacrificing time and even economic resources, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the brotherhoods.

These people inherited the vision of their ancestors, who under difficult times for the Catholic Church, working underground, they took the leadership through the confraternities and later brotherhoods, so that the faith would not die. Some religious customs disappeared and others emerged, however, the brotherhoods are the pillars on which a Christian community such as Salamá is based.

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Estandarte de la Hermandad Siervos
de Jesucristo.
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