

BROWN EYES ASCENDING

They were asked to assemble in a circle at the base of a small hill where a cross had been placed – a dozen or so six, seven and eight-year-old children shoulders-bumping, knees-knocking and territory being staked out like only children can.

Surprisingly, the volunteer leader quickly commanded their attention. In both Spanish and English, she explained the exercise.

Each child was given a small stone – a stone they were told that represented one of the nails driven into the body of Christ on the day of his crucifixion. The children settled quickly. Their body language suggested a genuine sense of gravity.

Could they really understand fully the significance and symbolism suggested?

At the base of the cross, a small metal pail had been placed. The children were then asked to quietly drop their stones into the pail.

One by one they climbed the small hill and one by one they each quietly dropped their stones into the metal pail... a sharp clang could be heard each time a child released his or her stone and with each one I found myself wincing.

The children returned to the circle surprisingly quiet and still.

They were asked about the meaning of such an exercise and one girl simply responded as follows: "Jesus was brought to a cave. Later he lived again and still does".

Satisfied with the answer, the volunteer leader dismissed the children.

They hesitated for a moment brown eyes ascending, and I knew right then that I had witnessed grace and innocence in its most lovely expression.

What a blessing!