

Healing & Development

2018 Edition

MEDICAL
MISSIONARIES
of MARY



MMM

*Rooted and founded
in love*



LOVING GOD AND
LOVING GOD'S PEOPLE

Volume 79 – 2018

Medical Missionaries of Mary

Founded in Nigeria in 1937 by Dublin-born Mother Mary Martin, today MMMs number about four hundred Sisters, who come from twenty different countries.

A growing number of men and women around the world are Associates.

The three words in the Congregation's title carry the inspiration that gives us energy to become engaged in healing some of the world's pain.

Medical: "Be with those who suffer, the oppressed, and those on the margin of life. Heal the sick, excluding no one... Let your particular concern be the care of mother and child" (*MMM Constitutions*).

Missionaries: "You are missionaries... Work with all people of good will. Join resources with them especially in the field of health, so as to bring about a world of justice and peace, where true human development is fostered, and human dignity and rights are respected" (*MMM Constitutions*).

Mary: "Ponder in your hearts the mystery of the Visitation. Be inspired by Mary's selfless love, her simplicity and faith, as she goes in haste to answer a human need, bringing with her the light that is life" (*MMM Constitutions*).

Our Motto:

Rooted and Founded in Love (Eph.3,17)

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Leader's Letter



Dear Friends,

Once again we are happy to send you our Yearbook, *Healing and Development*.

The theme for this year is: 'Loving God and Loving God's People'. It recalls the words of our foundress, Mother Mary Martin. After her experience of nursing during the First World War, she dreamed of bringing together a group of women who would bring God's healing love to others through a medical service. 'How this was to be done I'd no idea,' she said, 'but that stuck in my mind so I prayed and waited.' It would be many years before her dream was realized with the foundation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

'As MMM, wherever we are, we must proclaim the Good News through participation in Christ's healing mission. This may be done in a variety of ways and ministries. Reading the signs of the times in a rapidly changing world we shall be alert to new needs, opportunities and approaches' (*Constitutions* 9.16). Our Sisters, MMM Associates and co-workers continue to bring hope to vast numbers of people who are suffering, displaced and traumatized.

In this yearbook are stories from our missions around the world. Our feature story celebrates forty years of MMM commitment to the people of Appalachia in the USA. One important achievement is the yearly health fair. It brings together dedicated volunteer health professionals to provide basic care for thousands of people who cannot afford health insurance.

Many women continue to respond to God's call to become Medical Missionaries of Mary. In 2018, we rejoice with eleven Sisters of four different nationalities who made perpetual profession, the three Sisters marking fifty years and three celebrating twenty-five years of commitment as MMMs.

You can read interesting articles by and about our Associate MMMs and co-workers. Today MMM Associates are present in fifteen countries.

At this time we remember Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, Patroness of the Missions. Though she lived her life in obscurity, she has inspired people around the world with her simple way of holiness: to do the small things in everyday life with great love.

Thank you for helping to bring healing, hope and compassion to those in great need around the world. Thank you especially for your prayers and your financial and material assistance. We remember you each day when we gather for community prayer, asking God to bless you and your families.

Sister Siobhan

Sr. Siobhan Corkery, MMM
Congregational Leader

Our front cover photograph shows Sister Laurinda Bundo at an outreach clinic in Gandavilla, Angola. She works with other MMMs and clinic staff to respond to the concerns of local women. Providing improved access to health to care, promoting health, and encouraging women to participate in maintaining their own wellbeing enables them to contribute to positive development in society.

'Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages' (Sustainable Development Goal 3).

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St. Thérèse of Lisieux
Patroness of the Missions

'Holiness is not a matter of any one particular method of spirituality: it is a disposition of the heart that makes us small and humble in the arms of God.' (St. Thérèse of Lisieux)



Sr. Bernie in the health wagon

Marking 40 Years in Clinchco

Our 1969 MMM General Chapter approved establishing a mission in a medically underserved area in the USA. It would return some service to the country, be a formative experience for young MMMs, and show our way of life to women interested in joining us. We chose Appalachia, a region of 395 counties in 13 states, from southern New York to Georgia, Alabama and Missouri. A land of defeated and impoverished mountain people, up to 45% of those in Wise, Scott and Dickenson Counties of southwestern Virginia were within federal government poverty lines. The water was contaminated with acids from strip mining. Aquatic life was killed in about 12,000 miles of once clear mountain streams. The mines left only scarred, unstable and barren land.

Still, precious traditions were held in a place of great scenic beauty. We were requested to provide a medical service with pastoral ministry. Home nursing and visiting were also needed.

In 1978, three MMMs moved to Clinchco, a former company town owned by Clinchfield Coal Company. Newly-professed Sister Joan Grumbach, on her first mission assignment, remembered leaving Winchester, MA, with all their worldly goods stowed in the back of a pick-up truck. When they arrived at No. 9 Coal Camp, a bunch of wildflowers from a welcoming neighbour was on the pot-bellied stove. Unfortunately, the stove and many other things did not work. Lutheran pastor Don Prange and his wife came to their rescue and later arranged for them to announce their arrival on the radio.

Sister Bernadette Kenny, another of the three MMMs, wrote, 'We first visited homes. People knew we were to help in self-care, so they would understand their illnesses and how to promote health, and understand their own resources to stay healthy.' With the nearest buses an hour and a half away, it also meant bringing people to hospitals, getting medicine, and sometimes just being present. They also worked in a food co-op.

In Dickenson County there was no hospital and only three day clinics for almost 19,000 people. By 1983, Bernie found that she was limited by what she was able to do as a registered nurse. So she went to the Medical College of Virginia and became a family nurse practitioner.

In 1984 the Sisters got a health wagon, making the service much more visible and enabling them to do more. They plied the dangerous mountain roads, bringing basic care to remote locations.

In 1998 Bernie was invited to Mountain City, Tennessee, to see the work of Remote Area Medical (RAM) Volunteer Corps, founded by Stan Brock. Realizing its potential for Virginia, Bernie and her co-workers mobilized volunteers from across the state. The first RAM visit to Wise County, VA, was in 2000. Now a yearly, intensive three-day event, over 3,000 people were seen in 2018. It brings hundreds of volunteers together, including MMM Associates.



Sr. Johanna Power helped to assess clients.



Bernie with volunteers at RAM 2014



At 25 years: Sr. Bernie, Sandra, Teresa (with Kailee!) & JoElla



Advertising an early health fair

An ecumenical approach

Initially the MMMs participated in the small Catholic group, drawn from a thirty-mile radius. They cooperated with members of other faiths, including the interdenominational Church of the People. They worked together on various issues and had health fairs. They prayed together to give thanks afterwards. Bernie said, 'We would break bread together and reflect on the scriptures.' The leaders helped each other to understand local situations.



RAM 2018: Waiting for vision exams at first light

'In 1980, only 15% of families had sewage facilities and running water. Today only 15% don't have these services. We didn't have a hospital; now we have an emergency room. Still, specialty care is more than two hours away for most families. The Health Wagon and RAM provide free medical care to many thousands of families each year.

'There have been major changes in Church development. Formerly there were up to fifty families enrolled in the parish. Now at weekly Eucharist, we may have nine or ten folks. There are many reasons for this, including economics, families moving for jobs, and educational opportunities. Counter-cultural influences lead to different choices, e.g. consumerism, sports, etc.

'The greatest gift I have received is support from friends and family. They have looked after me and my home. They have healed me, teased me about being too serious about life and things that do not matter. They have fostered much personal growth. I have managed many challenges and difficulties through faith and love. I am deeply grateful, although at the time I would have wished to be somewhere else. Letting go of my opinions through non-judgmental acceptance of these people has been a blessing. I still have opinions, but am able to listen longer and wait to be asked for my thoughts, to share and invite further discussion.



Volunteers C. Pritchard; P. Adam, AMMM; R. Spencer & Sr. Bernie

'The gifts that MMM has given are the wonderful Sisters who have lived here, receiving and giving generously of their talents. Their visits to families are a great treasure. Many families value their advocacy for benefits for the sick and disabled. Many others visited and offered support. Many MMM Associates have also visited and worked here. The lives of many have been enriched by these connections.'

In August 2018, Teresa Gardner Tyson announced a groundbreaking for a new clinic in Dickenson County to be named for Sr. Bernie Kenny.



Teresa Tyson, Stan Brock, & Dr J Smiddy present gift & plaque to Bernie.

Much to celebrate

Sister Bernie has made Chinchco her home. Reflecting on the past forty years, she said the main changes have been life-supporting.



RAM founder, Stan Brock with Sr. Bernie



Bernie's nephew, Fr. Todd, came to celebrate 40 years' service.

Angola

‘The real journey of discovery begins in old age’ (Angolan proverb).



Children have fun with Sr. Mary and a mother.



Sr. Mary on a home visit



Family members support each other for a better life.

‘We go to the doorstep.’

Nurse-midwife Sister Alice Ashitebe, from Nigeria, helps to run a busy clinic in Viana. Still, as she told us, visiting people in their homes is the best way to identify community health needs. Health education in schools has also shown positive results.

Sisters Alice and Mary Dakom visit different areas two or three weekends a month or on public holidays, assisting in any way they can. This may involve sweeping, washing dishes, plaiting hair, encouraging good practices, and meeting spiritual needs. Mary sometimes goes with Eucharistic ministers or with a group of women after Mass on Saturday. Alice may go alone or with the catechumens.



Srs. Alice and Angela with Teresa and son

Alice visits Teresa, who was blinded from the explosion of one of the mines planted during the Angolan war. Alice said, ‘She is a widow with three very intelligent children. Before I met her she used to go with them to beg for food. Funds from MMM small projects have helped to take her off the streets and be independent. She has an underground tank that she fills with water. By selling the water she is able to provide meals for the family.

‘The three children are in school. The first son is a third-year medical student in a government university. Initially tuition was free. Students only paid for accommodation and books. In 2017 the government introduced monthly fees for tuition and for handouts and examination materials. It is becoming difficult for him to complete his studies. I tried unsuccessfully to get him a government scholarship.

‘Every month I visit an orphanage with the catechumens. They play games with the eighty children who live there. The children told us that while others come with material support, we are the only group that mixes with them. Sister Angela Anibogu provides health education for the girls.

Health education

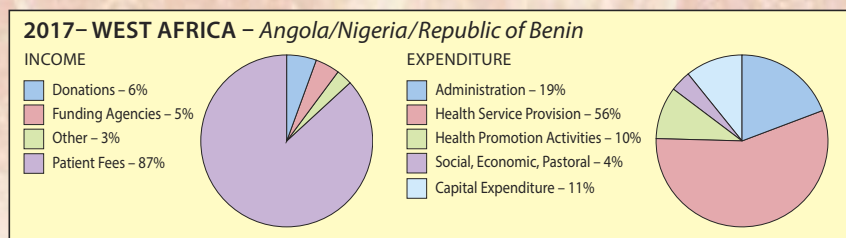
‘Sleeping under treated nets prevents people from being bitten by mosquitoes and getting malaria. We started education two years ago with Dom Bosco Secondary School, with fifty-six boarders. They now have mosquito bed nets for all the students. Up to March 2018, we had six to ten students every week at the clinic with malaria. Since May we have only seen three students with malaria. Malaria has also decreased in small children. Two years ago we saw two to three children with convulsions every clinic day. Last year there were about two a week. Since January we have had only six cases.



Outreach services at Viana

‘A staff team also does weekly home visiting to teach the children hygiene.

We are now organizing a health team in our parish. When the first phase has started we plan to do the same with other churches.’





'Yes we can...'

The people of Nordeste de Amaralina in Salvador live daily with the effects of societal violence. Sister Gladys Dimaku, from Nigeria, described some recent activities of Project Consolation, a programme that enables people to heal themselves.

'We have had a very difficult time here in Brazil, from the freezing of the budget in regard to health, education and social security, to the nearly two-week nationwide strike of almost all the parastatals. The violence and hardship also increased. The reduction in the age of criminal responsibility from 18 to 16 years means that we need to increase our efforts to reach young people.

'In Project Consolation we reach out to all, irrespective of religion, colour, or social or economic background. Our mission is to restore the dignity of the human person in a non-judgemental way, using a holistic approach. We use Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs to boost self-esteem, which is essential to self-actualization.

'This year we looked at how we could use health to reach out to our target population. The culture of silence has increased. People are afraid, discouraged and demoralized from all that has happened, including the imprisonment of the ex-president. He was a sign of hope for the *nordestinos*.



Children create artwork on *Dia da Familia*.

'Our *Feira de Saúde* (health festival) had the theme Oral Care. A dental clinic called *Qualité* generously offered a workshop on dental care for 150 mothers and 300 children aged from 4 - 12 years. It came at a time when the neighbourhood was going through one of many episodes of discrimination, with every social crime attributed to the name *Nordeste de Amaralina*. The arrival of the staff from another neighbourhood was a whisper of hope for the people that gathered. We used the opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles and behaviours.

'The dental clinic offered free dental assessment and consultation, and up to 40% discount on a price list, based on ability to pay. There was a question and answer session. We also measured blood pressure, glucose and weight. There was dancing to close the day.

'When we commemorated Mother's Day we made it more inclusive. Many of our beneficiaries in the schools are cared for by uncles, aunts or grandmothers, so we called it *Dia da Família* (a day for the family). It is in the family that it all begins.

'These activities in four schools and the project site were our contribution to putting smiles on the faces of those we serve. "Smile! It lets your teeth breathe."

Title from: "Yes, we can. Yes, we can change. Yes, we can" (Barack Obama).



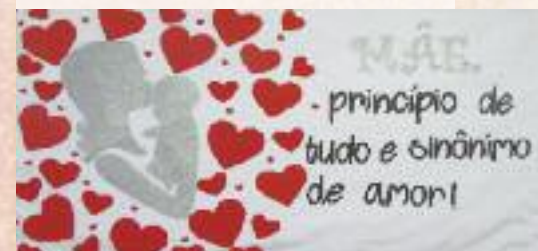
Sr. Gladys encourages good dental health.



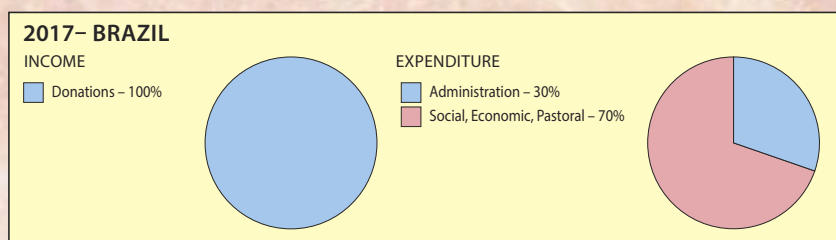
Smiling faces during Family Day in one of the schools



No celebration is complete without a cake!



Mother - the beginning of everything and the symbol of love



Honduras

'I am a human rights fighter and I will not give up this fight' (Berta Cáceres).



Sr. Danielle uses puppets in the PIRE project.



Teacher Roger helps children improve their literacy skills in PIRE.



Children receive their becas for the school year.

The Story of Esperanza

Sister Danielle Darbro, from the USA, works among a people who daily face great social and political challenges. She told us about Esperanza, who has endured in the face of these challenges to support her family.

'Esperanza, whose name means "hope" in English, is a living testament to the courage and faith of the women of Honduras. They are able to overcome incredible obstacles with a little care and support.

'Esperanza has four children. Three are from her first husband who died many years ago. Her second husband, an abusive alcoholic, used to beat Esperanza and the children. He did not work, yet he would eat most of the food. Esperanza tried her best to protect her children while trying to find employment. Her situation was difficult because she loved her husband and could not face the idea of leaving him. Her own family lived outside the area so she had no support. Her home was the small shack her husband owned.



Esperanza and children, Sirleny, Casa Visitation Coordinator

'As a woman of faith, Esperanza always hoped things would get better, but the scenario was always the same. He would be alright for a while, and then drink and become violent.

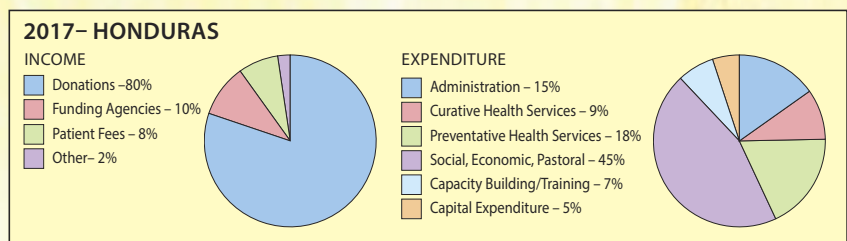
'She started coming to the Casa Visitación women's support group and met with our psychologist for counseling. Her eight-year-old daughter Jessica, who was having problems in school, joined our Integrated Education Reinforcement Program (PIRE), where she improved her math and Spanish skills and learned about human rights. Two of the children received becas (backpacks) with new school supplies. The family also received a monthly food basket from Casa Visitación.

'With consistent support, Esperanza finally found the courage to leave her husband. She reached out to her family and, with help, was able to move to a safe place with her mother and sister. Esperanza and her children now enjoy living free from abuse and say they are very happy. Esperanza earns money from agricultural labor and can support her family. Jessica is doing much better in school. Esperanza keeps in touch with us and says that she would never have been able to make the move without the love and support from Casa Visitación.



A positive environment for mothers and children through PIRE

'We rejoice with her and recognize that while we gave her support through a difficult situation, it was Esperanza's resilience, love for her children, and willingness to take a risk that allowed her to better her life. Esperanza is just one of many. We are so grateful to our benefactors who make it possible for us to support people like Esperanza, who, as her name suggests, gives all of us a sense of hope.'



We Need More Champions.

Sister Ursula Agge, from Nigeria, gave us a brief description of the work of Mukuru Health Centre, a community-based facility in the midst of Kwa Njenga slum. It is in a different world from central Nairobi, just ten kilometres away.

‘Motorcycles are the main form of transport on the narrow mud tracks here. Most of the over 900,000 people (2017 survey) live in shacks made of bits of iron sheets, mud, wood, plastic and cardboard. They are mainly squatters who moved from rural areas due to famine or lack of land or who came to look for work.

‘In these informal settlements up to six people may occupy one room, which serves for cooking, bathing and sleeping. Without clean water, proper drainage or sanitation, solid waste is dumped in the streets or other open spaces. Untreated waste from pit latrines is manually transported and deposited in streams and open drains. The health issues include malaria, typhoid, dysentery, tuberculosis and HIV. In this environment there are problems with drugs and substance abuse.

‘At Mukuru Health Centre we provide outpatient care. We had 13,894 visits in 2017. We have lab services, maternal and child health care, nutrition support for children under five years, HIV and TB services, cervical cancer screening, and social services. Our social workers and community health volunteers (CHVs) do weekly home visits (689 visits in 2017). As a link between the health centre and the community, they identify needs and report back so we can find solutions together.



Local youth collect garbage to improve sanitation.

‘In such great poverty and struggle, people easily fall victim to human traffickers, and gender-based violence is common. With CHVs and gender defenders we raise awareness in the community, in churches, and primary schools and provide interventions for trafficking survivors. There is always hope and people have developed coping mechanisms to survive. Community elders are active in working against trafficking. Small-scale businesses allow people to buy food for one day. There are also local support groups.

A special visitor

‘One of our visitors in November 2017 was boxing champion Carl Frampton. He heard about our work through Paul Healey, Trocaire Country Director. Carl wanted to support a youth group with which we work - a boxing club. Accompanied by his wife, he walked through the streets to where the young people eagerly awaited us. Fortunately the day was dry and sunny! Carl was encouraged that these boys and girls, though poor and often school dropouts, were happy and wanted to focus on a career. He taught them boxing skills and later sent equipment from Ireland.

‘We are grateful to all our champions, here and elsewhere, who work for the rights and betterment of the people of Mukuru.’

‘Do not follow a person who is running away.’
(Kenyan proverb).



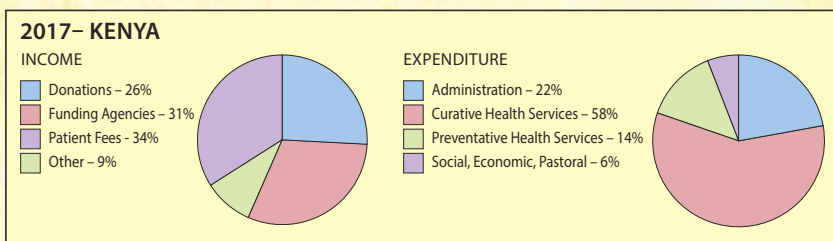
Door-to-door awareness on gender-based violence and HIV prevention



A march with the community to mark World AIDS Day



Carl Frampton with Sr. Ursula and staff



Malawi

'Don't think there are no crocodiles just because the water is calm' (Malawi proverb).



Solar panels installed at Kasina Health Centre



The solar water pump ensures services at the health centre.



A meeting for women leaders at Kasina

A Gift from the Sun

Kasina Health Centre offers basic health care to 72 villages in a rural setting. Included are maternal and child clinics, HIV-related services, and nutritional screening. Home-based and community health services are also provided. Sister Stella Ovientaoba, from Nigeria, told us how solar power is providing a sustainable solution to an ongoing challenge in Malawi.

'When I arrived at Kasina in 2011 we had almost constant electricity. We might have four to five hours without light but we were always informed when the Electricity Supply Company of Malawi was carrying out major repairs. The situation changed in 2016/2017. We began to experience "load shedding" - no electricity for six to ten hours; sometimes for two to three days. Imagine the situation in a health facility. There were many reasons, especially poor maintenance of the country's power supply, poor rainfall with low water levels for hydroelectric power, and corruption.



Environmental conservation: MMMs and staff plant trees.

'In our yearly ministry report we identified it as one of our challenges and considered possible solutions. A generator posed problems for maintenance, the environment, and the cost and difficulty of getting diesel. We are sixty kilometres from the city. We decided to use an abundant natural resource - the sun - to provide a solar power back-up. Though initially expensive, it would be much more cost-effective in the long term. It has zero pollution and there is abundant sunlight in Malawi.

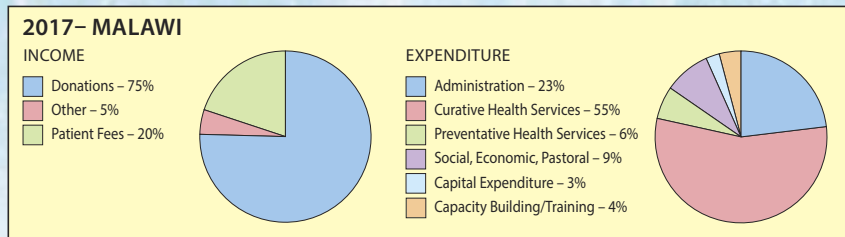
'We wrote to the Hilton Fund for Sisters for a grant. Having just completed one of their finance programmes, I was eligible to apply. Cara Malawi also helped. Then Christina Lyam, a great friend in Ireland who worked in Malawi as a pharmacist, read about our plight. She invited some friends to help raise money with a sponsored walk.



Participants in youth computer training

'We installed the system in May 2018. Since then we have had uninterrupted electricity. The nurses on night duty easily conduct deliveries. Services continue in the wards and staff don't have to use buckets for water because the pump works when needed. We can do our administrative work, including photocopying, charging computers and phones, and record keeping. With the refrigerators constantly running we are able to maintain the vaccine cold-chain, preventing spoilage. Lab technicians can do tests when required and women attending the screening clinic for cervical cancer can be treated immediately, rather than having to wait until the power returns.

'The solar power backup system is a wonderful development for Kasina Health Centre. The management, staff and the people of Kasina are immensely grateful to our donors for making it possible to provide services without delay, in a safe and hygienic environment.'



Bringing out the Best

Empowerment of women and youth is the main focus of an urban project in which Sister Letitia Enujuba, from Nigeria, is involved. She understands what it means to motivate others, especially in small ways.

'The MMM Benin City Integrated Project comprises four sectors. A Development Center is responsible for women's empowerment. The Vocational Training Centre has a computer school for youth. MMMs in West Africa have meetings in the Hospitality Center. The Primary Health Care (PHC) section provides outreach rehabilitation services in villages that have no hospital. It also organizes health and life skills sessions in schools.



A participant in the health talk competition

'On 7 June 2018, the PHC section organized a health festival for secondary schools in Benin City where we have established health clubs. We wanted to bring the students together, develop their giftedness, and encourage their participation. The vice principals and teachers were enthusiastic and we planned the day with the health club executives. Still, there were challenges in getting the approval of some principals and getting all the schools involved. The Government had scheduled a programme for the Edo State schools on the same day.

'We had a quiz competition on health issues, particularly malaria, personal hygiene, exercise, communicable diseases and nutrition. There was a health talk contest on the topic of hepatitis.

A speaker from the University of Benin Teaching Hospital School of Nursing covered first aid treatment. At the end of the programme the schools that participated received first aid kits.

'Because the programme was meant to be a motivating and empowering event, we had prizes for the schools that performed best and an award to the overall winner. To motivate involvement in environmental sanitation we also gave waste bins to these schools. It was a huge success. Four schools from Edo State participated in the festival, with about 180 people involved: students, teachers, guests, staff, MMMs and some computer students. Two other schools accepted an invitation to observe.

'This programme brought about unity among the students with whom we work. They talked about the importance of team work in their preparations and in their performance during the competitions. It spurred them to look seriously into research and to appreciate the essence of the health clubs. More schools invited us

to start health programs. Participants are keeping their environment clean and encouraging others by giving health tips during morning assembly.

'One health talk participant said, "Sister, this is a great privilege for me. I have never spoken in front of a crowd before."

'The love of God impels us to reach out to these young people who hunger to grow intellectually and as human persons.'



The moderator addresses students at the health festival.



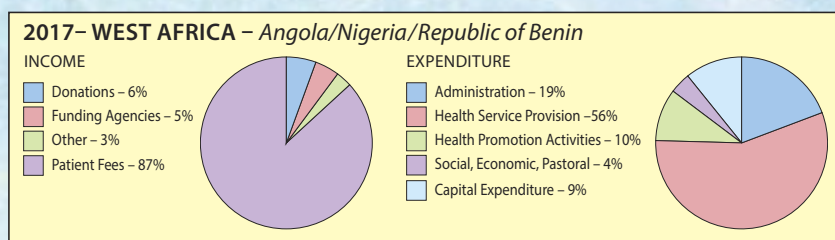
Students during a health festival meeting



Idogbo Secondary School: the winning school



Presenting a first aid kit after the festival



'Patience can cook a stone'
(Benin Proverb).

A Day of Joy and Gladness

Sr. Keresifon Ekanem, from Nigeria, described how the MMMs in Glazoué, Zaffé celebrated our 81st birthday.

'Marking our Foundation Day for 2018 was very special for our community in Glazoué. The day started cool and calm and we wondered what the rest of the day would be like. As usual we said our prayers, exchanged good wishes, took our breakfast, and off we went to work. Then we celebrated in grand style!

'There were shouts of joy and gladness in our clinic as we prayed, sang, and danced with our staff and patients. The staff shared their understanding of one of our core values: interconnectedness.

'So what really made it so special for Zaffé community? As it was for Mother Mary Martin, so it is for us now. Care for the health of mother and child is an essential element of our charism (gift) of healing. Our joy could not be contained when three bouncing babies - a girl and two boys - were delivered on 4 April.

'We are inspired by our MMM Constitutions, which say: "Be present to the peoples of today, share their joy and hope, their anguish and struggle. Live in solidarity with those who suffer."

'And so we celebrated with all who were present. The mothers went home smiling with their families, with packages for their newborn babies. Of course the staff had their own share of the celebration cake.

Reaching out

'The people of Egbessi, one of our neighboring communities, do not come to the clinic very frequently. We went to the village to give health talks on malaria and diabetes and encouraged them to sleep under the treated mosquito nets they had received. The rains had started with full force, providing a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Malaria often results in a high fever, leading to convulsions and anaemia in children. We asked them to come to the clinic as soon as they noticed a fever.

'We also conducted free tests for malaria and diabetes. One hundred and two children and adults availed of the service.

'The anniversary coincided with the day for our community Mass and with the birthday of Père Isidore Cadousse, who celebrated the liturgy with us. He went home with some scones to celebrate with his friends.

'This was a day to reflect on our vocation. We offered special prayers for our leaders and for our Sisters facing challenges in their mission. We prayed for the MMMs who have gone before us and for new members to follow our MMM way of life.

'It was a day of great joy indeed!'



The happy mothers and their babies



Everyone gets involved in health screening at Egbessi.



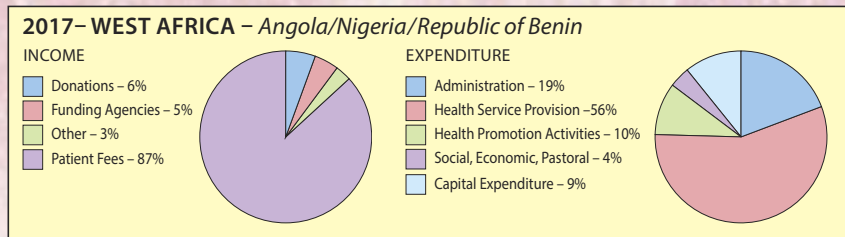
Sisters, staff and relatives rejoice with the newborns.



Sisters and staff conduct malaria and diabetes tests.



Srs. Chinenye and Rosemary with the mothers and infants



'A child is a child of everyone'
(Sudanese proverb).

A Centre for Healing at Eastern Bank

The MMM Healing Centre in Eastern Bank, Wau, was opened on 31 May 2018, the feast of the Visitation, a special day of inspiration for MMMs. Sisters Josephine and Magdalene described the event, the culmination of much planning, collaboration and prayer.

'We had been praying for good weather but the day began with showers! Possibly the farmers were praying for rain and it was a blessing for the celebration. We were anxious, though, when the blessing continued until 9:00 a.m. It was all hands on deck to set up by 10:00.

'We began with Mass. Fr. Marco Mangu, Administrator of Wau Diocese, presided and other diocesan and religious priests concelebrated. The students of Loyola Secondary School formed the choir, singing in English and Arabic.

'During the liturgy, we (Srs. Irene, Josephine and Magdalene) renewed our vows by devotion, giving an opportunity for the people to hear what we profess as MMMs. Fr. Germano Bernardo, former vicar general, spoke about our beginnings in Wau. He remembered being assigned to take the pioneering Sisters around Western Bahr El Gazal, now Wau State, when the late Bishop Majak invited us to the diocese.

'The inauguration ceremony followed. Sr. Irene, programme coordinator, described the development of our work at Eastern Bank and the activities of the MMM Community-based Health Care Programme in the past five years. We worked closely with the communities and helped with sack gardening, borehole drilling, training of hand pump mechanics, and the ongoing expanded programme on immunization (EPI).

'Mr. Moses Ukel received a certificate as a trained vaccinator, sponsored by MMM CBHC with the Ministry of Health EPI Department in Wau. Because it has been a challenge to find someone committed to this work this was an important achievement.



Sr. Irene with Fr Marco Mangu at the Mass

'Mrs. Theresa Anyuat, Honorable Advisor for Gender, represented the Governor of Wau State. She cut the ribbon to officially open the MMM Healing Centre. The State Minister of Health, Dr. James Ibrahim Patrice, unveiled a plaque bearing the names of donors. He encouraged the continued collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Church.

'As the centre was blessed Dr. Patrice and Mrs. Anyuat had a tour of the compound. The Loyola students did a colourful cultural dance, joined by some of the Sisters, priests, and the ministers! We shared lunch with the neighbourhood children. It was wonderful to see them enjoying their rice, beans, bread and meat.

'We send a sincere "thank you" to our MMM Sisters, Associates, donors, family members and friends, who supported us in so many ways for the opening of the MMM Healing Centre.'



Srs. Josephine, Irene and Magdalene renew their vows.



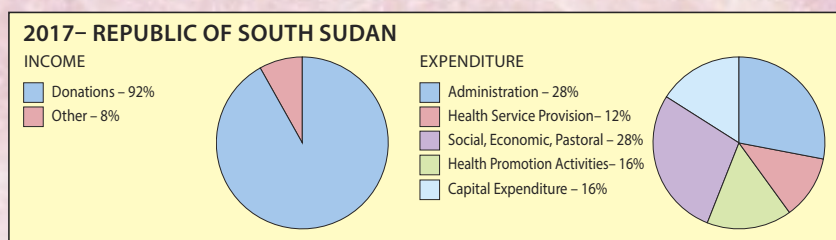
Students from the Loyola Secondary School choir



Br. Rosario, Comboni, presents Moses with his certificate.



Dr. Patrice and Mrs. Anyuat cut the ribbon to open the healing centre.



Golden JUBILEE

**'YOU SHALL CONSECRATE THE
FIFTIETH YEAR'** (LEV251 NASB)



Sr. Agnes with a young patient in Malawi

Sister Agnes Hinder, our only MMM from Switzerland, was born in St. Gallen in 1927. Before joining MMM she worked for 5 years in domestic science, for 3 years as a children's nurse, and completed general nurse and anaesthetics training.

In 1962, before going to Malawi as a lay missionary, she was sent to Drogheda to learn English and our MMM ethos. After 4 years in Mzuzu she decided to join MMM and began postulancy there. She completed her novitiate and midwifery training in Drogheda. In 1970 Agnes returned to Malawi. She served for over 20 years at St. John's Hospital in Mzuzu, for 4 years in Nkhata Bay, and for 7 years in Chipini.

In 2007, at age 79, Agnes returned to Ireland. She worked in the Beechgrove infirmary for 4 years and now receives nursing care in *Áras Mhuire*.



Sr. Rosemary at the students' hostel

Sister Rosemary Mohan, from Scotstown, Co. Monaghan, was born in 1944. Before joining MMM she taught in England, completed a commercial course, and trained in hospital administration. She also worked as a clerk-typist. After profession she completed a B. Comm. and worked in the laundry accounts office in Drogheda.

Assigned to Nigeria in 1975, Rosemary served in Irele and then at Ibadan as hospital administrator. She was Central Business Administrator from 1983-92. After a sabbatical, she was chaplain at an international students' hostel in London. In 1996 she was appointed to MMM leadership in Ireland. She trained in reflexology and worked with a project for homeless people in London. She also trained as a psychosynthesis counsellor.

In 2002 Rosemary was assigned to Rwanda/Uganda. She did counselling, reflexology and massage workshops, and was Area leader. Returning to Ireland in 2010, she worked in the *Aras Mhuire* accounts department and later was appointed business administrator in the Motherhouse.

Silver JUBILEE



Sister Catherine Fallon was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1947. After profession she trained as a general nurse and midwife.

In 1977 she was assigned to Tanzania and worked in Makiungu. She was on the formation team and was directress of vocations. In 1981 she moved to Arusha and served in MMM leadership. In 1985 she returned to Makiungu for 3 years as hospital matron. She also spent 4 years in Kabanga, in maternity nursing and leadership. In 1993, Catherine moved back to Arusha and was part of a health team in maternity and child health.

After helping with mission awareness in the USA, she returned to Tanzania and spent 4 years in Nangwa in community-based health care, becoming project coordinator. Assigned to the European Area in 2010, Catherine has been a member of the clinic team in Beechgrove since 2011.



Sr. Catherine looks after babies in Tanzania.



Sister Charity Munonye is from Imo State, Nigeria and worked as a secretary before joining MMM. After profession she completed development studies in Ireland. In 1994 she was assigned to Tanzania and worked in administration in Makiungu for 7 years. She did further studies in business and management and since 2007 has worked in administration at local and Area levels in Nigeria.

Since early 2017, she has served as hospital administrator at Mile Four Hospital, Abakaliki.



Sister Maria Gonzaga Namuyomba is from Masaka, Uganda. After joining MMM she completed studies in business administration and accounting in Kenya and Ireland. In 1998 she was assigned to Malawi and served there for 2 years, followed by 8 years as a hospital administrator in Nigeria, and 4 years in youth ministry in Honduras.

After a short time as Area Business Administrator for East/Central Africa, she was appointed Area Leader in 2015. She is based in Nairobi, Kenya.



Sister Eunice Okobia is from Delta State, Nigeria. Before joining MMM she did business studies and worked as a typist and radio operator. After profession she trained as a community nurse in Kenya and as a general nurse in Uganda. In 1999 she was assigned to Nigeria and worked in Mafoluku, Lagos for 3 years. After obtaining a diploma in community health she served in Fuka, Nigeria.

Since 2011, she has been on mission in Abuja, in northern Nigeria, where she is involved in primary health care.

Tanzania

'One who harvests in the scorching sun eats under the shade' (Tanzanian proverb).



Sr. Helen explains homeopathy and holistic therapy.



Teaching reflexology through Swahili



Moirra Brehony presents certificates to reflexology students.

Finding Healing at Ngaramtoni

Sister Helen McKenna, from Ireland, uses her ministry to bring inner peace and wholeness to many.

'In my experience people no longer rely solely on conventional treatments but do their own research on the Internet and check out natural medicines and therapies.

'I have trained both in natural therapies and in counselling and psychotherapy. As a holistic therapist I have an opportunity to see the client's presenting problem as not just an isolated physical problem, but representing a disease on another level: soul, spirit, mind, emotions or relationships. People with chronic illnesses who have not found a cure from conventional medicine are often willing to go deeper and discover the underlying disease.

'Time is just as important as any therapy I have to offer. A two-hour session gives the client time to tell their story and to decide the best therapy together. Most importantly, there is time for education on managing their condition and taking control of their lives. This may involve changing their life-style or attitude to prevent a recurrence.

'I ask two questions:

1. "What is the function of the organ?" I ask for the client's answer from the unconscious.
2. "What happened in your life a year or so before the symptom appeared?"

'For example: "What is your eye for?" "For seeing" is a common answer. I ask, "What in your life do you have dis-ease looking at?" One young man replied quickly, "I am married six years and have no child."

'Mary (not her real name) had pain along her right side. She was being treated for rheumatoid arthritis with very little effect. I was curious about the symptoms only showing on her right side.

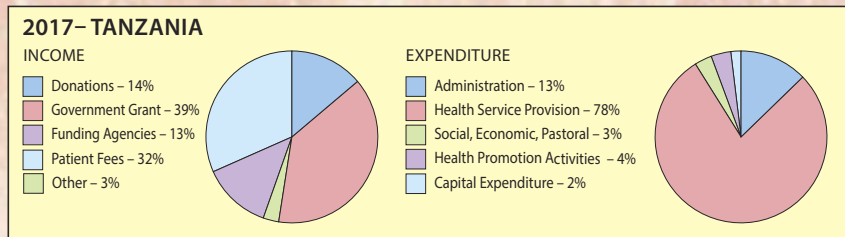
'Interpreting the symptom has its own language. The left side is for receiving and the right side is for giving. I asked Mary, "Do you have a lack of ease in your life around giving?" "Yes", she replied, and explained that her brother was an alcoholic. She gave him and his children her hard-earned money, but it was like "throwing money down the drain". As we talked she began to see that she had been giving reluctantly. Because she couldn't live with herself if she didn't help him, the alternative was to change her attitude and share willingly, even if it brought no apparent result. Mary left, determined to pray about the need to change her attitude.

'One month later, Mary reported that half of her symptoms were gone. She got the message coming from her soul and through prayer was able to be at peace with her actions.

'I am convinced that this approach will be the way to healing in the future.'



Using magnet therapy after paralysis



Uganda

'One who sees something good must narrate it' (Ugandan proverb).

Behind Prison Walls in Kampala

In May 2018, five MMMs moved to their new home in urban Kampala and continued to research ministries in keeping with the people's needs. Sr. Elizabeth (Betty) Naggayi, from Uganda, told us about her tentative beginnings, reaching out to incarcerated women. She was inspired by the example of Sr. Helen Aherne, who has since returned to Ireland.

'During a Lenten homily I felt inspired to visit those in prison. The following morning I went to Luzira Upper Prison but I knew no one by name. The guards encouraged me to get permission from the Commissioner of Custodial Services, Safety and Security Operations. Disappointed, I recalled Sr. Helen Aherne's stories



Sr. Helen with Sr. Maria José, from the new community

about her prison visits. I immediately e-mailed her and she was excited about the idea. She knew the commissioner and gave me the names of women she used to visit. When I met the commissioner and mentioned Sr. Helen, he beamed. There would be no problem to visit because I had the names.

'The next day I went to Luzira Prison. When Josephine (not her real name) appeared she looked sceptically at the guard and then at me. The moment I gave Sr. Helen's greetings, she was overjoyed. She hugged me and tears rolled down her cheeks. She asked,

"Is Sr. Helen alive? This is my fifth day of a novena to Mother Kevin, asking that I would get news of Sr. Helen and have a visitor. I cry alone to God daily."

'She told me that she is the leader of the Catholic community. Known as the prisoners' "aunt", she encourages the desperate and those who think of hurting themselves. She works with the catechist and joins the charismatic renewal members when they come. She prays the rosary daily. These prayers keep her going because life is difficult, more so when no one visits. Josephine has served 17 years of her sentence; she has 13 years left. She said, "I cannot afford a lawyer. God knows how I will win my case and get out of prison, a changed person."

'I asked what she needed: she said body cream, food, charcoal, and hair dye. I left her praising God for this visit.

'The following day I took her some food. As I walked home, I reflected on our MMM charism. I realized that in sharing and listening to Josephine, I felt God's healing presence penetrating her - but amazingly myself as well. I learned that God uses any place - even a prison - as an opportunity to touch, console and heal human brokenness. May God grant me the spiritual, physical, psychological and financial strength to reach out to many people locked behind prison walls.'



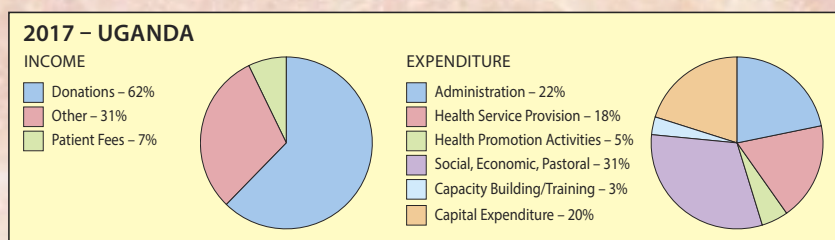
Our base for ministry in Kampala



Unpacking on the first day!



Prison walls in Kampala



'Called to MMM from its beginnings' (MMM Const.)

Sister Juliet Ezekwere, from Nigeria, joined MMM in 2008. Trained as a nurse-midwife, she was assigned to Uganda in 2011. She worked in Makondo until we handed over our programmes there to the Diocese of Masaka in February 2018. Now assigned to our new mission in Munyonyo, Kampala, Juliet participated in the Heritage Experience in April 2018 and visited some of our early MMM foundations. She told us about some of the highlights.

'I left for Ireland in the early stages of our new mission. I had the opportunity to visit our Motherhouse and learn more about our foundress, her inspiration and our beginnings. I shared the experience with Sisters Chibuzo Aloka and Vivian Igwe. They are also from Nigeria and now are missioned there. Chibuzo studied microbiology and sustainable human development and is in Torugbene. Vivian, a nurse-midwife, works in Shogunle, Lagos.

'At the Motherhouse, Sister JoAnne Kelly led us in a very reflective way through the Mother Mary Room. We were struck by the mystery of her life. She was open to God's will. The events in her life enabled her to see different possibilities even when it was so difficult. She developed a deep personal relationship with God, responding to God's inspiration. Today I and many others are sharing in her testimony.'

They visited the church in Glasthule, outside Dublin, where Marie Martin was baptized. Juliet commented, 'We were amazed to find Mother Mary's name in the baptismal register, dating back to 1892. It showed me the importance of safekeeping the files and documents from the beginnings of MMM. I realized that archives are sacred spaces in which the story of our lives and journeys are kept. I should maintain these in my own mission area.'

The participants were touched by the life they brought to the Motherhouse. Juliet said, 'It was a time with Sisters who had not met us before. It brought joy and gratitude as they recalled and shared passionately their mission experiences. I witnessed their lives in community as they expressed God's love by helping and being present to one another. They listened with enthusiasm to the stories of our different missions, which gave them hope for the future. Their passion called me to cherish every moment and live my life to the full each day.

'I found these experiences encouraging as I become part of a new mission in Munyonyo. We need a deep trust in God, active listening and risk-taking to respond to God's call and discern ministries that will respond to the people's needs. As a community, we want to reflect and evaluate to see the way forward.'



Learning about our Benedictine heritage at Glenstal



Visiting the Mother Mary Room with Sr. Jo Anne Kelly



At our Congregational Centre, Rosemount, Co. Dublin



The site of Mother Mary's childhood home, Greenbank



Experiencing the ancient monastic site at Glendalough

In Gratitude for a Gift of Healing

We thank our many generous friends who made it possible for us to continue our work in the past year. We are grateful to all those who worked in cooperation with us, especially the governments of the countries in which we work. We could not maintain our services without them. Their contributions are included under funding agencies.

Unspecified large donations received by Congregational Business Administration are allocated, after discussion, to places in most need.

Pie charts

The first set of charts shows the breakdown of the income and expenditure for MMM for the works of the Congregation during 2016; the second set shows that for 2017. The proportion of income provided by funding agencies and our other donors amounted to over 40% of our overall income for 2017.

We greatly value our partnership with donor agencies and the generosity of our other friends who have supported us so constantly over the years. We are deeply thankful for their interest and encouragement, which is bringing God's love and healing to countless thousands in need.

We also wish to express our thanks to the dioceses that supported us last year through Mission Awareness. For this report, these are the Dioceses of Ferns and Elphin in Ireland, several deaneries and dioceses in England, and the dioceses in the United States that welcomed us through the Mission Cooperative Plan.

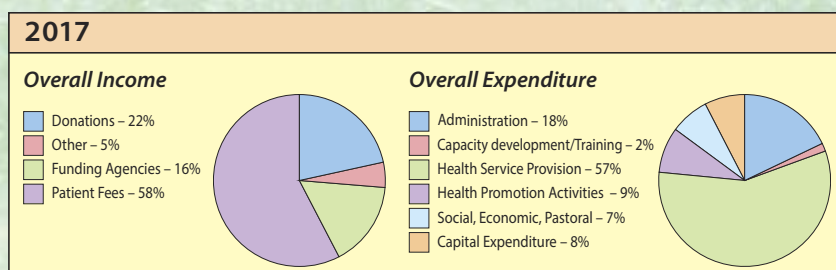
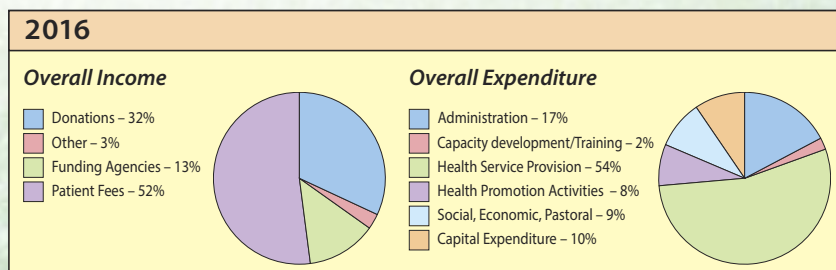
Please note the wording for some of the categories in the pie charts. Under Health Services Provision we have included all expenditures involved in Curative Health Services. Health Promotion Activities include those activities involved in Preventative Health Services. Some countries may have a number of houses and ministries but one may take the bulk of funding, e.g. Makiungu Hospital in Tanzania. This is a large institution needing well qualified staff, up-to-date equipment, and large quantities of drugs.

Upgrading and capacity development for our staff and clients has a high priority in our work. While charts for some countries lack a specific category for capacity development or training, many staff members avail of training and updating provided by our donors or government. Staff are given time off to attend courses and continue to receive their salaries. MMM, through our Resource Team, also runs workshops that are funded by our donors, so these costs do not appear in our own expenses.

Under individual country reports, please note that West Africa includes Nigeria, the Republic of Benin and Angola.

Funding for MMM students in Nairobi, Kenya and those in first formation in Ibadan, Nigeria is accounted for under the MMM Congregational Centre.

MMM has appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure transparency and accountability in our financial reporting.



OUR PROMISE TO OUR DONORS

When a donor specifies a country, project or special need (e.g. women's development, AIDS), 100% of that donation is transferred to the specified country or project. We allocate non-specified donations to the most urgent needs overseas or add them to our General Mission Fund, which pays for airfares, professional training of Sisters, and emergency needs overseas.



Young people in Kasina, Malawi received training in the use of computers, increasing their prospects for earning an income.

How you can work with us ...

- ❖ Pray with us. We remember you each day.
- ❖ Join us as members of MMM.
- ❖ Share our charism as MMM Associates.
- ❖ Make a donation by mail or online at www.mmmworldwide.org
- ❖ Leave an enduring gift of health and healing in your will.

Remembering us in your will or giving a donation in memory of a loved one helps us to plan for our work. You can specify how and where your gift will be used.

Please include: "the Congregational Leader, for the time being, of the Medical Missionaries of Mary".

Data protection information is available in our Privacy Statement on our MMM website at www.mmmworldwide.org

Ireland

'A handful of skill is better than a bagful of gold' (Irish proverb).



The Christian meditation group in Beechgrove



Cira at Knock Shrine in Co. Mayo



Working in the stamp department



With Sisters from the Motherhouse

Forever in Our Hearts

Our MMM Motherhouse in Drogheda is a hive of activity. A home for many of our older Sisters, it offers hospitality to people who come to visit, pray, and learn more about our story. Cira Franca, from Brazil, had a special reason for offering to help there. She recalled highlights of her experience on returning home at the end of June.



Cira at the Motherhouse reception desk

'The desire to volunteer with the Medical Missionaries in Mary came from knowing them in Brazil. I met Sisters Brigid Mc Donagh and Anna Friel in 1973 when I was thirteen. They treated and cared for sick people and I helped with patient files and facilitated translations from Portuguese.

'Other Sisters arrived: Phyllis Heaney, Ann White, Eleanor Donovan, Anne Moran and Sheila Campbell. I continued helping with parish work and noticed how they related to people – with a spirit of generosity, love, faith and healing.

'In January 2018 I was already retired. I wanted to share my gifts and appreciation for the great work that the MMMs did in Brazil, so I asked if I could volunteer at Beechgrove. Soon I had a reply, explaining what activities I could help with and inviting me to come.

'I arrived at Easter, a time of new life. The experience of volunteering showed that our intention is to offer help, but we end up receiving, mainly affection and learning.

A reservoir of wisdom

'I accompanied Sisters to the hospital and clinics, helped in the laundry room and stamp department, listened to their stories, songs, and poetry. I also learned what inspired them to join MMM. These were moments of inspiration and meeting with God. I had many pleasant walks with Sisters. Some were contemplative; others involved conversation about the history of the region.

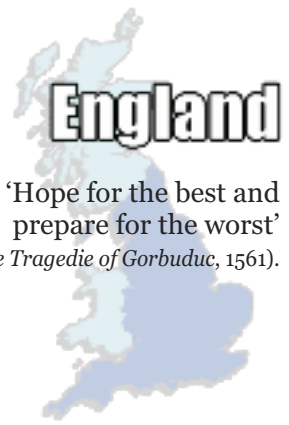
'I helped in Aras Mhuire Nursing Facility, where I could recreate with the Sisters. Sometimes I helped with gardening. At afternoon prayer I read prayers and helped with singing. I discovered more possibilities of being closer to God at Christian Meditation, particularly with Sister Noreen's Smyth's group.



Part of the MMM community at Beechgrove, Drogheda

'Visiting Knock and Glenstal Abbey with Sisters from Africa were two sacred gifts. I could appreciate the Irish nature and culture and enjoy being with the Sisters that I knew from Brazil. Can you imagine how important it was to be and meet these Sisters? They still carry the Brazilian people in their hearts. I went home renewed in the Spirit of God, with plans to extend in Brazil the experiences I have had.

'Everlasting gratitude to all of you.'



'Hope for the best and prepare for the worst'
(from *The Tragedie of Gorbuduc*, 1561).

A Caring Community

Sister Ruth Percival, from England, is based at our house in Ealing, London. She kept us up-to-date with some of the activities in which the MMM community is involved.

'Over the past year, living under the shadow of Brexit, many people asked for our prayers and told us about their illnesses, anxieties, or family problems.

'We participate in groups in Ealing Abbey Parish, such as lectio divina, meditation, and Teams of Our Lady. One of us is a member of a group of older people who pray for teenagers who find life difficult. A mother wrote to tell the group that her son is doing better and she appreciated their support. We also serve as Eucharistic ministers and readers.

'We are part of a team of missionary congregations who do Mission Awareness in England and Wales.



Sr Ruth at the interfaith event in Ealing Town Hall

'We welcome our MMMs who have business here and sometimes get visas for Sisters preparing to travel. This year one of our visitors was a woman who had worked for short periods on Mercy Ships, which provides surgery for people with little medical care. Recently she went for a longer stint. She asked if could she come and talk about her "coming back" transition. We enjoyed sharing with her for a couple of days.

'We keep in touch with our MMM Associates in England, Scotland and Australia. On 3 April 2018 we were

sad to hear of the death of Dr. Dietrich Dettmann in Sweden. After working with us in Nigeria and Kenya he came to England where he became an enthusiastic Associate. He later retired to Sweden but kept in touch with us. We also take care of local correspondence and donations.

Part of the wider world

'In June our Member of Parliament, Rupa Huq, invited us and other religious groups to an interfaith meeting in Ealing Town Hall. She wanted "to facilitate communication between community leaders and keep everyone updated on faith-inspired services in Ealing, Acton and Chiswick."

'At Ealing Abbey, our Justice and Peace and Care of Creation group has monthly collections for the Ealing Food Bank. We used an idea from CAFOD (the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) to highlight the plight of refugees worldwide. CAFOD suggested that we try to "walk around the world" - 24,900 miles - mile by mile, thinking how it is for the refugees and their families. We organised a walk in our parish. When twenty miles have been walked we contact CAFOD and that is added to the total. We have started the second lap.

'We are grateful to our many friends who support us so generously.'



Activities at Ealing Abbey include care for the environment.



Srs Maureen and Mary deal with correspondence and local finances.



Visitors Sr Deirdre (L); Fr Paul (Tanzania), & Dr Farrington (Project Arusha-R back)

The USA

'I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me' (Sojourner Truth).



Sr Joyce, OSF (L) & Connie (R) serving many years in Chicago; Sr Joanne Bierl



Srs Kathie (C) and Radegunda (R) with Kenya First Lady, Mrs. Margaret Kenyatta



Srs Kathie and Joanne, MMMs at our Development Office in Chicago

Then and Now

Sister Kathie Shea, from the USA, trained in business and finance and served at MMM local, area and congregational levels in East and West Africa, the USA and Ireland. Presently based in Chicago, she is our business administrator for Brazil, Honduras and the USA.

Recently a panel of eighty Sisters applied to write for *The Life*, a monthly feature of *Global Sisters' Report*, a source of news about Catholic Sisters around the world and the issues facing the people they serve. The panellists, from many congregations, came from or are working in seventeen countries on six continents. Kathie's reflections were among those chosen for the June and July 2018 editions.

Appropriately the June edition was titled 'Down is the new up: learning the lessons of religious life'. MMM was founded by a woman with great concern for the health of women and children. Over the years we have expanded our understanding of healing and Kathie has learned that 'that the important thing is often not what you can do for someone in a large or grandiose way, but what you bring to another, especially with a genuine expression of care and interest.

'Living for many years in East Africa and traveling to so many of our missions, I met some wonderful, extraordinary (and ordinary) men, women and children. Despite our occasional lack of ability to communicate, they touched my heart with their joys and, yes, with their needs to be healed and helped.

'Children with their wide smiles and ticklish laughs always touched me. They let me see beyond the immediate circumstances and enjoy the present moment with them. There were the mothers, fathers, and grandparents who walked miles for the basic needs of a loved one and yet often would stop to chat or share the little they had with me, the stranger.

'One such mother and child lived in Rwanda. I met them while visiting our Sisters and instantly fell in love with the child. Despite having some serious physical limitations, the boy had a huge smile. His mother was clearly devoted to him and they did not have a lot of material resources. Yet after I had spent a few minutes each day with them on several occasions, the mother brought me a live chicken to thank me for spending time with them. The chicken proceeded to lay an egg in my hands!

'How easy it is for me to say they did far more for me than I ever did for them with my brief visits. Their smiles and generosity remain with me to this day, not to mention my surprise at the chicken laying an egg.'



Sr Kathie at work in Kenya



Sr Kathie and friend in Rwanda

Ways of Being

In the document *'Rejoice and Be Glad'*, Pope Francis reminds us of the universal call to holiness. 'The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts' (Para 12).

In our search and in living out our individual calls, it can be helpful to find others who share our values and support us. Some join a religious society with a special gift or charism that attracts their members. MMM has a charism of healing. People who support these groups may also be attracted by the charism and feel a call to live it in a deeper way. Groups of Associates have developed to meet that call.

Moira Brehony and her husband Eamonn have been part of the MMM Associate movement since its beginnings at our 1997 Congregational Chapter. St. Louis Sister Winifred Ojo asked Moira to present her experience at a meeting of 25 Sisters of St. Louis and associates in Paris in May 2018.

The charism of the St. Louis Sisters is 'May all be One'. It calls them 'to grow towards oneness in Christ and to foster right relationships with God and the whole of creation.' That certainly resonates with our MMM charism!



Sr. Winifred, SSL; Associate Frances, and Moira at the meeting

Always room for growth

Moira explained: 'Eamonn and I undertook the preparation programme to become associates where we lived and worked with the Sisters in Tanzania. We were assigned an MMM mentor and joined the Sisters for prayer. We attended daily Mass in the local church. Our spiritual life continued to develop.

'MMM invited us to work with them as associates and we set up the MMM Mapambazuko Training Centre. Eamonn and I were then doing work previously only done by the Sisters. Eamonn facilitated courses and I managed the training centre. I now administer an MMM Village Primary Health Care Outreach Programme. It was managed by an MMM until October 2017. She was due for upgrading and I was requested to take over the responsibilities.

'I am both a member and an elder of a lay-led ecumenical Christian Community Church, which enhances my scope to live as a committed Christian. In our local MMM community I take my turn to lead the Divine Office, sometimes initiating a

special service for, e.g. an MMM feast. I also feel privileged to be a Eucharistic minister in our local Catholic church.

'Being an associate has given me the skills and the confidence to explore ways that I as a lay person can help and influence others.' The meeting in Paris was an opportunity to share that experience and encourage others on their path to holiness.



At a workshop for MMMs, AMMMs and staff in East/Central Africa



The Brehony family at Tarangire National Park, Tanzania



MMM Angolan Associates participated in a perpetual profession.



A group of MMM Associates in Choloma, Honduras

There is a reliable source of electricity in Kasina, Malawi.

The lack of a reliable electricity supply made it increasingly difficult to offer much-needed health care in this rural area. However, sunlight is rarely lacking and a number of supporters allowed us to tap into this renewable energy source. The Hilton Fund for Sisters, Cara Malawi, and Christina Lyam and her friends in Ireland helped to install a back-up power system for Kasina Health Centre. **Read the story on page 10.**



Solar power outside the maternity ward

Sister Stella Ovietaoba said that the health centre is in a mountainous area with poor roads that become impassable during the rains.

The main means of livelihood is subsistence farming and malnutrition in children was a serious issue. In the past few years a Training for Transformation programme in Kasina has promoted self-reliance and food security as well as health education and nutrition training for mothers. These interventions have resulted in to reduced admissions of children to the nutrition rehabilitation unit.



Health centre staff receive computer training.

There is a new centre for healing in South Sudan.



Cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the healing centre

There was great joy for the people of Wau when the MMM Healing Centre was opened at the end of May. An undertaking of this kind involved contributions from many sources. **Sister Irene Balzan** said that among them was the Malta Mission Fund, which funded part of the building. Mr. Victor Sciberras, c/o Tektraco Ltd., supplied laboratory equipment and the cost of shipping it from Malta. Electrofix supplied a water solar pump with solar panels and Evolve Ltd. gave laboratory equipment. In addition, Mr. Kekoo Modi supplied and shipped over 200 new nursing and medical textbooks for the MMM Healing Centre

and for Solidarity with South Sudan. Irene wrote, 'There were so many others whose names do not appear here whose generosity we also appreciate.'

Read the story on page 13.

In March 2018, Sister Irene wrote, 'An important aspect of our ministry is simply being present to the people. The sense that someone cares about their welfare has had an effect on people's mental well-being because many suffer from a sense of hopelessness and despair.'



Seeing a sick child in the new centre

There are more opportunities for children in Honduras.



Gaining self confidence through PIRE

We are grateful to our friends from Helping Other People (HOPE), who make it possible for children from low-income families in Choloma, Honduras to attend school. The attention of these families is often focused more on concerns of daily living, such as what to eat, housing, and dealing with violence. Sister Danielle Darbro wrote: 'More than 150 *becas* - backpacks full of new school supplies - are provided each year for needy children in our area.'

Read the story on page 8.

Based in Yonkers, New York, HOPE has been one of our partners since we began in Choloma in 2004. They donated much of the funding to build our centre, *Casa Visitacion*. They have provided medical and other supplies and have helped with our home care program. They came to visit us to see what their contributions have done.



Children receive supplies for the school year.

'Death will be no more' (Rev 21:4).



Sr. Sheila Lenehan was born in Dublin in 1943. After joining MMM in 1961 she trained as a nurse. In 1969, she was one of the first two MMMs assigned to Brazil and did her midwifery training there. She worked in São Paulo for the next 14 years in pastoral work and MMM formation and leadership.

In 1985 Sr. Sheila was elected to MMM Congregational leadership.

In 1992 she returned to Brazil. For 11 years she again served in São Paulo: in a project for people with AIDS, in pastoral health care, and in MMM formation and leadership. In 2003 she moved to Capim Grosso, where she developed water projects for farmers and income generation for women.

Sister Sheila returned to Ireland in 2015. After a long illness she moved to Our Lady's Hospice in Harolds Cross, Dublin. She died there peacefully on 26 July 2018.



Sr. Gemma Breslin was born Mary Breslin in Co. Mayo in 1923. She worked in a hotel before joining MMM in 1945. After profession she helped in the Spiritan's seminary in Kimmage for 2 years. She then joined 2 other MMMs in founding a new mission in Kabanga, Tanganyika –now Tanzania – in 1951. This developed into a general hospital. In 1955, she began MMM's first foundation in Uganda, at Kitovu.

Here services were developed for people affected by HIV/AIDS and for women with obstetric fistula that became models for other countries.

In 1961, Sr. Gemma was asked to begin in yet another country, this time in Mzuzu, Malawi. She was to spend 22 years in Malawi before returning to Ireland in 2001. She also served in MMM leadership for 5 years.

Sr. Gemma moved to *Aras Mhuire* in 2005. She died there peacefully on 22 February 2018.



Sr. Veronica Tarpey was born in Co. Mayo in 1928. She worked as a clerical assistant before joining MMM in 1955. After profession she was assigned to Angola and served for 16 years as secretary, bursar and housekeeper in remote MMM missions. She then worked in Ireland, accompanying women interested in joining MMM. She was a secretary at the Motherhouse and at the Apostolic Nunciature and served for

several years in MMM leadership.

In 1986 Sr. Veronica returned to Angola and spent 9 years in vocation work, in teaching at the Lubango Pastoral Centre, and in MMM leadership. In 1997 she was elected to the Congregational Leadership Team as Zonal Coordinator for Europe for 6 years. She then helped in Bettystown and in the Motherhouse.

Sr. Veronica became ill in February 2018 and moved to *Aras Mhuire*. She died there peacefully on 7 March 2018.



Sr. Louis Marie Brett was born Mary Elizabeth in Co. Sligo in 1926. She helped on the family farm, worked for as a governess, and cared for her younger siblings before she joined MMM in 1955. After profession Sr. Louis Marie did nurse training and a commercial course. She later trained in hospital administration. In 1964 she was assigned to Nigeria, where she spent over 13 years as hospital secretary and in MMM leadership.

In 1984 she returned to Ireland. She was local bursar at our Motherhouse, assistant to the regional bursar, and helped with driving. She also worked at Rosedale Residential Home in Kilmacow. In 2010, Louis began a new role in the stamp department.

When Sr. Louis Marie became ill in February 2018 she moved to *Aras Mhuire* for nursing care. She returned to the Motherhouse but remained unwell. She died there peacefully on 3 June 2018.



Dr. Dietrich Dettmann, AMMM, was born near Berlin, Germany in 1940. From a farming background, he qualified as a physician and went as a missionary to work in a Lutheran hospital in Nigeria. While there he got to know the MMMs in the area and helped in our hospitals in Anua and Urua Akpan. While in Nigeria he became a Catholic.

Afterwards he moved to England and worked in general practice. He became an enthusiastic MMM Associate and attended meetings in Ealing. When he retired to Sweden he kept in touch with the Sisters, renewing his Associate covenant by telephone, e-mail, etc. Dietrich had been in poor health for the last year or so. He died on 3 April 2018 in Stockholm.

A life of compassion

In 1968, MMMs Srs. Jean Clare Eason and Kay Lawlor graduated from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, in Boston, MA, the only women in their class. In May 2017 Helene Ragovin, editor of the alumni magazine, was researching a story on the school's history. Sadly, Sr. Jean died in 2015, but Helene asked how she could contact Sr. Kay. The Spring 2018 edition of *Tufts Dental Medicine* featured the follow-up interview.

In 'Her Calling Is Compassion', Julie Flaherty described how 'over nearly four decades, Sr. Kay fixed teeth, ran hospitals, and confronted health-care crises. Back home in Massachusetts, she's giving women who need it the chance at a new start.'

Kay served in Ireland, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya and returned to the US in 2013. She now volunteers at Bakhita House, a shelter for women recruited as labourers or sex workers through force, coercion or fraud. Many human trafficking victims come from homes marked by poverty, abuse and lack of love. They are vulnerable to the promises of the first person who tells them that they matter. Kay provides acceptance, understanding and support. She said, 'The whole idea is to create a loving environment where they are accepted as they are.'

Farewell to a great missionary

Sr. Dr. Leonie McSweeney recently returned to Ireland after working tirelessly in Nigeria for the past 58 years. People from all walks of life attended her sendoff at Eleta, Ibadan on 2 April 2018.

A dedicated and experienced physician, Leonie worked in Urua Akpan, Anua, Ibadan, and Ondo. She is mainly remembered for introducing the Billings Method of family planning in Nigeria. Leonie trained thousands of instructors all over the country and *Love and Life, Billings Method* was incorporated into marriage courses. Regional instructors and area coordinators of Pro Family Life Association of Nigeria (PLAN), which Leonie founded, were especially represented among many friends and well-wishers. The Archbishop of Ibadan, Dr. Gabriel Abegunrin, and Dr. Felix Alaba Job, Emeritus Archbishop, presided at the Mass. Area Leader Sister Celine Anikwem thanked Sister Leonie for bringing happiness to many Nigerian families.

World Meeting of Families

We welcomed Pope Francis, who attended the World Meeting of Families in Dublin from 21-26 August, 2018. This major international event, held every three years, brought together families from across the world to celebrate, pray and reflect upon the central importance of the family as the cornerstone of our lives.

Congratulations to our students

Sr. Pauline Kongo graduated with a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree from Kenya Methodist University.

Sr. Bernadette Fadegnon completed studies in Sustainable Human Development and is assigned to Brazil.

Heritage group

On 7 July 2018 five MMMs arrived in Beechgrove from several countries of ministry: **Saratu Benjamin** from Uganda, **Cecilia Nchekwube** from Malawi, **Ursula Agge** from Kenya, **Mary Cletus Dakom** from Angola, and **Nancy Ong'era** from Nigeria.

They met our Sisters in Aras Mhuire, who laid the foundations of so many of our missions. It was an opportunity to tell stories and share words of encouragement. As they went through the Mother Mary and Mission Rooms, they saw how we have grown and the ways in which we have expressed our healing charism. They visited Glenstal, where the early MMMs learned Benedictine spirituality, and Monkstown, associated with Mother Mary's early years. Sr. Ursula reflected: 'These experiences showed us the importance of letting go, of seeing and seeking God in all things, and persevering in prayer. We go back to our ministry energized and full of enthusiasm to continue with the good work of MMM.'



Sr. Breeda Ryan



Sr. Catherine Carey

Receptions and Professions

Since July 2017, 8 women were admitted into the **International Novitiate** in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Seven Sisters - from Nigeria, Malawi, Brazil, and Tanzania - made **first profession** in September 2017.

Welcome to the Congregational Centre

Sr. Catherine Carey took over from **Sr. Breeda Ryan** as Congregational Business Administrator in August 2018. We thank Breeda for her commitment and dedication over many years and welcome Catherine in this important work for MMM.

PERPETUAL PROFESSION



Sr. Kay Lawlor



Sr. Léonie, Archbishop Abegunrin & MMMs at the Mass



The Heritage group at Rosemount

St. Austin's Parish, Nairobi, was the setting for the perpetual profession of Sisters Pauline Kongo and Obianuju Egwuatu on 14 April 2018. Family, MMMs, staff and friends filled the church.



Sisters Obianuju and Pauline before the ceremony

The procession, led by liturgical dancers, began at 10:00 a.m. Then followed MMMs, who came from South Sudan, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya; Sr. Pauline with her parents, and Sr. Obianuju with Mr. Valentine Udeze from Nigeria, representing her parents. Ten priests concelebrated, including Fr. Joseph Kongo, Sr. Pauline's brother. Bishop Dominic Kimengitch of Lodwar Diocese presided.

Sr. Angela Lyapa, MMM, speaking in English and Kiswahili, explained the ceremonies and MMM Associate Thomas Nyawir was the choirmaster. The St. Juan Diego choir from Guadalupe Parish provided beautiful singing.

At the rite of perpetual profession, Sr. Jacquelline Nalubega, directress of temporary professed Sisters, called Pauline and Obianuju forward. Sr. Pauline's parents and Mr. Udeze accompanied them to the altar and prayed for them. Then each Sister declared before the assembly, 'I ask for God's spirit through following Christ in his healing service until death in the Congregation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary.'

In his homily, Bishop Dominic shared his joy in knowing MMM Sisters for many years, mentioning many by name. The work they did over the years in Lodwar Diocese in Kenya is still relevant and visible. He recalled visiting our motherhouse in Ireland and the joy of the Sisters in reliving their experiences in Lodwar. He encouraged Pauline and Obianuju to work hard in following their example. After an interrogation by the bishop, Srs. Bernadette Fadegnon and Ursula Agge sang the litany of saints.

The two Sisters read their profession formulas, which were accepted by Sr. Maria Gonzaga Namuyomba, MMM Area Leader. The newly-professed sang a song of dedication and then received their rings, signifying their lifelong commitment and fidelity to God. All the MMMs present embraced Srs. Pauline and 'Uju', affirming their oneness with us. Then Sr. Maria Gonzaga saluted the Sisters' parents in the Kikamba language and introduced the Sisters from different countries to the congregation.

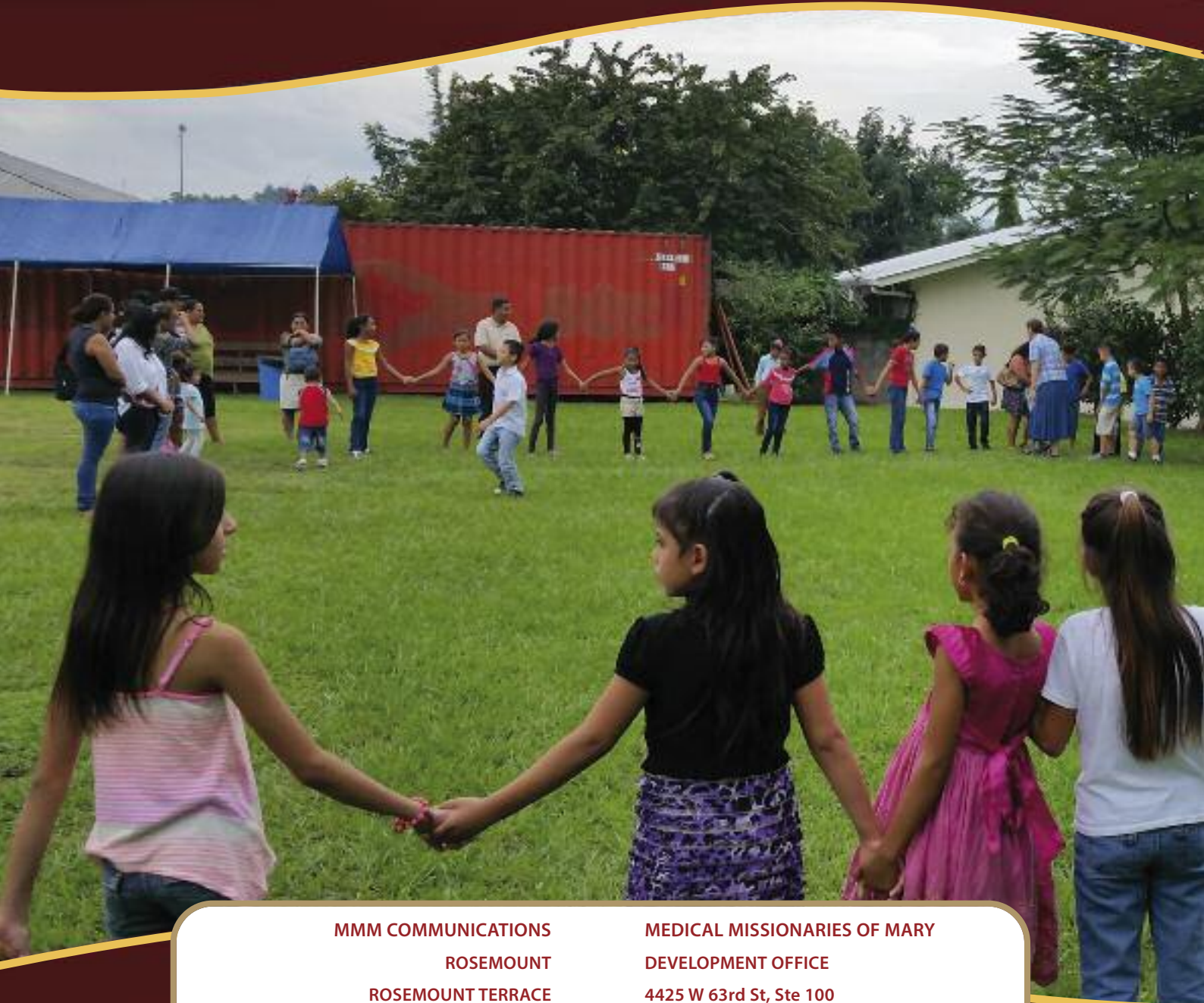


MMM with Bishop Dominic and concelebrants

The parish hall was packed with guests for the reception, with our MMM Associates playing an active role. Mr. Thomas Nyawir was the MC and his wife, Judith Onyango, coordinated the serving. Four-year-old Mary Martin, daughter of Associate Agnes Mana, helped to cut the cake. A beautiful dance accompanied this ceremony and the choir and liturgical dancers entertained the guests. A prayer brought the special day to an end.

**‘THEN YOUNG WOMEN WILL DANCE AND BE GLAD,
YOUNG MEN AND OLD AS WELL. I WILL TURN THEIR
MOURNING INTO GLADNESS’ (JER 31: 13 NIV).**

YOUNG PEOPLE CAN DANCE IN HONDURAS.



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