

# MMM

*Rooted and founded in love*



## MEDICAL MISSIONARIES of MARY

SUPPLEMENT TO HEALING & DEVELOPMENT — VOLUME 76 — EASTER 2015

***“Were our hearts not burning  
within us while he was talking  
to us on the road?” (Lk 24:32 NRSV)***



# Meetings on the road

## A ministry of presence: Camino de Santiago

Throughout human history, people have gone on journeys to find deeper meaning in their lives. Many of the world's great religions encourage pilgrimage to places of special significance. The shrine of Saint James (Santiago) de Compostela in Spain is one such place, drawing travellers from across Europe since the ninth century. Sister Rita Kelly wrote about her experience at the end of 2014.

"In Ireland, this is the time of year when we are in the throes of winter, when we start thinking of holidays and warmer weather. Last year I experienced a different type of holiday. During a Vocations Ireland Seminar I heard about the Camino Chaplaincy. Father Alan Neville informed us that they were looking for volunteers. So from 27 August until 4 September 2014, I served as a volunteer at the English-speaking Camino Chaplaincy in Santiago de Compostela in Spain.



*Sister Rita at Cape Finisterre*

"There had been an extraordinary revival of interest in the medieval pilgrimage route across Spain in the last thirty years. It is estimated that each year over 100,000 people take part on foot, by bicycle, and even on horseback. Pilgrims come from all nations and backgrounds and for many different motives. Some are searching for meaning in life. Some seek spiritual redemption. Others are just interested in a good long walk!



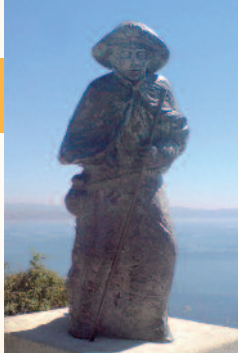
*Pilgrims gather in the Cathedral square.*

"There are as many Camino routes as there are starting points. Eventually everyone comes to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. It is believed that the body of the Apostle Saint James the Great is interred in a tomb there.

"The Camino Chaplaincy is an initiative of the cathedral, acknowledging that many pilgrims have deep spiritual needs at the end of the pilgrimage, when they finally arrive. The Chaplaincy provides a place of welcome, a listening ear, and space to reflect. Each country and language has a chapel within the cathedral. The English-speaking Chaplaincy was based in the Chapel of the Our Lady of Soledad.

"I stayed in an apartment with two other volunteers: Sister Jennifer, a Good Shepherd Sister from Cork, and Father Ralph Heskett. Each morning we opened the Chapel of Our





*Statue at Cape Finisterre*

Lady of Soledad at 9 a.m. and prepared for the 10:30 a.m. English-speaking Mass. Pilgrims started to arrive slowly and increased rapidly in numbers as the morning progressed. After the Mass we invited the participants for a cup of coffee and a chat. Even though there was a daily Mass for pilgrims in the cathedral, they appreciated the English Mass and the opportunity to talk. At 4 p.m. we returned to the chapel for a short reflection service and offered another time of presence for the pilgrims.

"I met people from Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Canada, the USA, England, Ireland, Poland and Scotland. Their stories and experiences were many and varied. I found one common thread: the Camino experience was more than any individual expected. Many acknowledged that it was an experience of a sacred journey, of awakening of 'something other'. For some, it was their first experience of total solitude and isolation. There were the challenges and hardships on the route, and then companionship and friendship with strangers. One pilgrim said she was always worrying whether she would get a place in a hostel. One night, when there were no places available, the local community opened up the church and allowed the pilgrims to sleep there, supplying them with food. After that experience she let go of her many daily worries and concerns.

"The pilgrims greatly appreciated the Chaplaincy service, for the place and time they were given so they could begin the process of understanding what had occurred to them on the journey. I met a number of people who return every year to continue parts of the route. People were also offered the opportunity to write down their personal intentions. These were placed in a basket and remembered each day in the Eucharist and daily liturgy.



*Petitions left by pilgrims*



*Cape Finisterre: "End of the world"*

"The Cathedral of Santiago was not the final stop for all. Many continued to one of the westernmost points of mainland Europe, Cape Finisterre (Latin for 'end of the world'), a small piece of land jutting out into the Atlantic. I walked this part of the journey. The cliff top is marked with a cross and a pair of worn out boots. It is awe-inspiring and a great way to contemplate the completed journey. I felt privileged for the opportunity to participate even for a short while, to be with the people who have walked and

experienced the Camino de Santiago. For many it was an experience of a 'God who is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy' (Ps 102)".

# We need each other.



Sister Joan Grumbach, from the USA, is based at our mission in Nangwa, Tanzania. She wrote about a recent journey she made as part of the outreach team that brings health care to distant areas. The challenges she described in her "Masusu misadventure" are not uncommon!

"Farmers in this area are happy that the rain, which started in December, has continued into January. All the same, even in the dry season it takes almost an hour and a half to reach our furthest outreach clinic in Masusu, a village which takes its name from a local tree.

"On 20 January we set out for Masusu from Nangwa, after a phone call to the village leader assured us that the road was passable. We used four-wheel drive in four different places, but arrived safely after two hours. Some mothers and children were waiting and the village chairman welcomed us. More people came and we began the clinic with health education. One hundred and forty-two children were weighed and vaccinated as needed. We saw the pregnant women in a locally-built mud house. Two wooden beds with rope mattresses were provided for examining the sixty-five women. The roof of the house had started to leak.



*Waiting for vaccination*

"Halfway through the clinic the sky darkened. A few minutes later there was a heavy downpour, lasting half an hour. Twenty-five women and children crowded into the small room where I was. We waited out the storm, careful to avoid the sections where the roof was leaking! The five of us on the team continued our work. When we finished, we were given hot tea and chapattis, a kind of pancake.

"We were advised to take another route back to Nangwa. A woman who lived on the road came with us to show us the way. We passed through fields with narrow tracks and across swollen streams and began climbing. Just at 5 p.m., in a particularly muddy area, our Toyota land cruiser got stuck. We got out of the car and saw that the left rear tire was badly stuck. People who lived nearby came to offer practical suggestions and help. Attempts were made to dig us out. Branches were cut and placed strategically and a



*Staff Theresia vaccinates a child.*



flat board was placed under the tire for traction - unfortunately all to no avail.

"We heard the sound of a motorbike and were happy to see a man from Nangwa. He offered to take the driver back to Masusu to look for a tractor. Since there was no phone network where we were, our driver, John, said that he would contact the Sisters back in Nangwa. An hour later we heard the sound of the motorbike and a tractor. As the tractor came into view, we were pleased to see that there were fifteen men with it, including the village chairman from Masusu. Various options were discussed and it was decided that the small tractor should pull the vehicle backwards. In the process the tractor got stuck! It was getting dark as a second attempt was made and failed.

"A bigger tractor was needed so the small tractor and driver were sent back to search for one and to phone Nangwa with the news. A Lutheran pastor and a family with twelve children kindly provided the stranded staff with ugali, made from cornmeal, and milk.

"We received a message from home that our second car would come to take the staff home. It was after 11 p.m. when the larger tractor arrived. It also got stuck! It was midnight when the lights of our Land Rover came into view. An attempt was made to pull the clinic Toyota out using a rope, but this also failed.



*Driver John stayed with the car.*



*Mothers made their way to the clinic on foot.*

"Welcome hot tea and bread had been sent in a basket. John and another man stayed behind with some of the provisions while four of us from the team climbed into the Land Rover for the journey home. We arrived around 4 a.m., tired but grateful and safe and sound! The other Sisters welcomed us warmly. They had stayed up, praying and dozing as they waited.

"Fortunately the next day there was no rain. Others went back in the morning and dug out the larger stuck tractor. Our car was eventually pulled out around noon, arriving back in Nangwa around 3 p.m. We are thankful for all those who came to our aid."

# Sharing the MMM Journey

## First Associates in Rwanda



*Sister Angela Katalyeba*

It was such a great joy for MMM in Kirambi to receive our first three Associates (AMMMs) from Rwanda. Aloysie Mukamana, Xavier Bizimana, and Dominique Ndayisenga made their covenants on 13 August 2014.

"This is a day that we all longed for and wished to see,' they said. Four years ago, the three started their journey to become AMMMs. They had participated in our healing Charism but now they felt ready to commit themselves openly to be part of MMM and share in the Charism in a deeper way. We in Kirambi have experienced how they are dedicated to serving our common mission. Two are part of Kirambi Community Development Programme. The third is a teacher in a primary school in the local parish.



*Aloysie, Xavier, and Dominique making their covenants*



*The three new MMM Associates receive their emblems.*

"The new Associates are grateful for the support that all the MMMs have given to them at different stages and for accepting them to be part of MMM. We were inspired by AMMMs Moira Brehony and Eamonn Brehony who visited us and shared their experience.

"The covenant day was beautifully prepared. We were happy to have Sister Maria José da Silva, East Central Africa Area Councillor, with

us from Uganda. Mass was celebrated in the sitting room because we could not all fit into our small chapel. The two priests in the parish and the deacon joined us. Each Associate came with one friend to witness this great day. After the new Associates made and signed their covenants, the three Sisters in Kirambi community presented each with an emblem of the Visitation. We joined for a meal to thank God and rejoice together.

"May God bless them for their generosity."

Contributed by Sister Angela Katalyeba, MMM

Editor: Sister Carol Breslin, MMM

Designer: Judi Lennon

Photo contributed by Sister Maria José da Silva, MMM

# Called to eternal life with God



## **Sister Karen Shearer, MMM**

Elizabeth Shearer was born in Galston, Ayrshire, Scotland in 1930. She worked in textile making before joining MMM in 1965. She trained in social science and served in the Apostolic Delegation in London for ten years. She then worked in Kenya for twenty-seven years.

Sister Karen was a social worker and coordinated women's groups, helping the women to become self-supporting. Returning to Ireland in 2005 she helped in the Motherhouse. She moved to our nursing facility, Aras Mhuire in 2014 and died there peacefully in on 5 January 2015.



## **Sister Anastasia Taggart, MMM**

Sister Anastasia was born in Rock, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone in 1921. She taught as a secondary school teacher for eight years before joining MMM in 1950. After serving as editor of our magazine she was assigned to Nigeria. For ten years she served as a teacher, social worker, secretary, and in MMM leadership.

Sister Anastasia returned to Ireland in 1967 and studied social anthropology. She spent six years in leadership at our Dublin House of Studies and helped revise our Constitutions. In 1980 she returned to Nigeria to give talks on our Constitutions. She then trained as an archivist and did a diploma in social and economic studies before spending twenty years as the MMM Archivist in Drogheda. Sister Anastasia moved to Aras Mhuire in 2013. She died there peacefully on 19 January 2015.



## **Sister Josefa McKiernan, MMM**

Sister Josefa was born in Armagh in 1931 and joined MMM in 1949. She trained as a radiographer and worked for six years in the hospital in Drogheda. In 1960 she was assigned to Nigeria, where she worked in x-ray and pharmacy.

Sister Josefa returned to Drogheda in 1967 and again worked in the hospital x-ray department. After further studies in radiography she was superintendent radiographer for seventeen years. She also served in MMM leadership. Josefa retired to our Motherhouse in 1999. She moved to our nursing facility in 2009. She died peacefully in Aras Mhuire on 3 March 2015.



## **Sister Bernard McCarroll, MMM**

Sister Bernard was born Catherine McCarroll in Kilsyth, Scotland in 1931. She joined MMM in 1953 and trained in nursing and midwifery. She worked as theatre sister for eleven years in Drogheda and for four years in Italy. Assigned to Nigeria in 1977, she served there for the next thirty-five years.

Sister Bernard was well known in Eleta, Ibadan, where she worked in the maternity unit and theatre, as deputy matron, administrator, and in MMM leadership. She became unwell while on home leave in 2013 and was transferred to Aras Mhuire. Sister Bernard died peacefully on 13 March 2015.



## *How you can help us with our work*

- Pray with us.  
We remember you each day.
- Make a donation by mail or online  
at [www.mmmworldwide.org](http://www.mmmworldwide.org)
- Join us as members of MMM.
- Share our charism as an MMM Associate.
- 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  
will help 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."

## **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.

## **Your Privacy is Important:**

We respect your privacy. Any  
information that you provide to us  
will only be used for the purpose  
for which it is given, and will be  
processed in compliance with the  
Irish Data Protection Legislation.  
It will not be shared with any other  
organisation, unless required by  
law, or requested by you, such as  
for the processing of a tax claim.

***We wish all our friends a Happy Easter***

### **Our Addresses:**

Please mail your donation to:

MMM Communications, Rosemount Terrace,  
Booterstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: +353 1 2887180

**OR** Mission Development Office, 4425 W 63rd St, Ste 100  
Chicago, IL 60629-5565. Tel: 773-735-3712

### **OR Send direct to our Bank Account:**

Medical Missionaries of Mary, Bank of Ireland, Merrion Road, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Sort Code: 90-12-12.

Account Number: 62835417

IBAN IE88 BOFI 9012 1262 8354 17

BIC (Swift) BOFIE2D

**N.B.:** Ask your Bank to include your name with your transfer.

### **OR Send online through our website**

Charity Reg. Nos. Ireland: CHY 7150 England: MMM Trust 293494

In the USA, we are a Tax Exempt 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization.

**If you have donated  
to MMM recently,  
thank you for  
your generosity.**

*Come visit us at:* **[www.mmmworldwide.org](http://www.mmmworldwide.org)**