

MMM

'Rooted and founded in love'



MEDICAL
MISSIONARIES
of MARY

Easter 2024

SUPPLEMENT TO HEALING & DEVELOPMENT - VOLUME 85



Renewing Our
Faith





Welcome

Hello Friends of MMM,

We are delighted to bring you our Easter Supplement 2024 where this year we focus on the joy of Easter and the renewal of faith. At times when much of the world seems blighted with darkness, in the form of war, famine, injustice, violence and poverty we need more than ever to renew our faith. It is easy to have faith when everything is going right. But faith is not a one-time commitment, it is an ongoing one that requires us to constantly grow and renew our belief.

This year we are focusing on renewing faith and our MMM Values which guide us daily:

- Commitment
- Compassion
- Interconnectedness
- Integrity
- Creative Fidelity
- Hospitality

We revisit what these values mean to us and we encourage you to do the same. Our MMM Missions constantly seek new ways to overcome suffering and hardship in the remotest and poorest areas of our world. We are bringing clean water where there is none. We are making birth safer for women in areas with high, unacceptable child and maternal death rates. We are bringing healing and health to people who would otherwise not be able to access any. We are bringing hope and a future to a generation of young people who would otherwise be doomed to a life of poverty and suffering.

None of these efforts would be possible without the generous giving of the MMM friends who support our efforts and now continue to grow along with us in hope and perseverance. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your ongoing faith, love and charity.

With blessings,

Sr. Sheila Campbell, MMM



Our Faith, Our *Values*



Commitment:

The MMM Congregation was founded by Mother Mary Martin in 1937 and has continuously brought the healing charism to the world since the earliest of days. When a woman becomes an MMM, she makes a vow to go to where she is most needed to serve.

The spirit of commitment is there and it grows and grows with each year. The MMM Sisters are sent from their homeland to another country, hundreds or thousands of miles away, often needing to learn a new language and adapt to a new culture. Their extensive training prepares them for this departure, but each Sister commits herself to learning and embedding themselves in the new culture.

We are delighted to share that the MMM Congregation continues to grow with more Sisters taking their vows and more coming through the novitiate training. It is a joy to see so many young women willing to take a leap of faith and become MMMs. They are encouraged to train in a profession of healing to be qualified to relieve people's emotional, mental or physical suffering.



From the earliest of days, the MMMs could not have trained and done the work we have done and are doing now without the commitment of our supporters and donors. Your prayers and constant generosity make our mission work possible.

'We give thanks for the commitment of the MMM Sisters, our Associates, our staff and our supporters for all we can do to renew faith in those without hope.'

Compassion

We often meet people at their worst. Our MMM Sisters are there for children and adults facing difficult situations usually that they didn't create. Born in areas of extreme poverty, violence or strife, these people are denied the





basics that many of us take for granted. It is hard for many of us to imagine our children only being able to eat once a day at school or our elderly dying alone on concrete floors with no medication. These are the people our MMM Sisters strive to help daily.

Along with essential resources like medicine, medical treatment, therapy or supplies, our MMM Sisters also deliver compassion. More than anything, people often need a kind word or a gentle hug. Our MMM Sisters provide counselling and pastoral care to people who experience tragedy, dire poverty and illness. Bringing the healing charisma by their loving presence is something our MMM Sisters radiate from their core. They seek to end suffering and to offer comfort.

We pray to show compassion in all we say, in all we do and in all we are so that people can experience God's love through us.

Interconnectedness

When our MMM Sisters treat a person, they treat the whole person and even provide or find services for the entire family. Many of our MMM Sisters are trained and experienced in several forms of healing at one time.

There was a grandmother in a house terminally ill with a disease and unable to provide for her grandchildren who had been abandoned by their parents. Our MMM Sisters not only ensured that the woman received medical services and care, but they also ensured that the children were getting an education, went to school and had sufficient supplies. They know that all things are interconnected.

In our time as MMMs, our focus has changed to reflect on certain aspects of care. We are now very focused and concerned about the Climate Crisis as it is impacting the poor the most, while they did the least to cause it. Injustice anywhere is seen as injustice everywhere. We are committed to prayer and to action that ends suffering everywhere, not just where we are now.



Integrity

There was no greater role model for integrity than Jesus. He was not afraid to speak up and to defend the poor or to protest injustice. People of integrity can

be counted on to stand up for what is right, even if it is unpopular and to do the right thing even when there is no one around to see. Our MMM missions seek to bring social justice into places in the world where the peoples' voices are not heard. We actively seek to promote and act to counter human trafficking.

A young woman who was in our MMM Income generating programme learning to be a seamstress was taught about the danger of human trafficking. A talented young seamstress with ambitions, she was offered a position in a bigger city by her relatives. To her horror, her own



family member had sold her into sex trafficking slavery. She was drugged in a nightclub and raped continuously. Due to our Counter Human

trafficking training, she knew what to do and was able to escape and returned to her grandmother.

We seek a world where human trafficking no longer exists. We seek a world where people have enough food. We seek a world where safe childbirth is available to all women, not just the wealthy. When we have integrity we can get upset about the condition of the world, but we take action to change it.

We ask God for the courage it takes to always have integrity and to fight for what we believe is right and just.



Creative Fidelity:

Sometimes when things become hard, it is difficult to remain faithful to our values and beliefs.

At these times we remind ourselves that God's love never ceases. When we meet with people who are experiencing disease, illness and extreme poverty

they deserve our utmost respect and faithfulness.

The key to this value is the way our MMM Missions persist even in the darkest of circumstances. We are often facing challenges that seem insurmountable, but as Mother Mary used to say, 'if God wants the work, God will show the way.' We renew our faith constantly and bring a faithfulness to our daily tasks that allow us to be born anew each day.

Facing all the challenges of our suffering world, we are called to be creative in finding new paths. We do not blindly repeat what we do but are constantly innovating to find the best possible way to reflect, evaluate and discern what is best for all involved. We are faithful when we stay true to our values and explore new ways to heal and serve the most needy.

May we stay faithful to our beliefs and show our unshakable faith in loving actions in the world especially where it is most needed.

Hospitality:

MMM Missions serve all the people in the areas where we work. We welcome everyone as Christ would be welcomed. We know that Jesus also made everyone welcome and did not discriminate against the people He healed. We serve people who may or may not have the same beliefs as us, but in doing so they are brought closer to God's loving family.



MMM Sisters serve in very difficult situations at times. Being there for a mother who has just lost a baby, an elderly sick parent who is dying, a child with a rare illness, a town with no clean water or a parent trying to find their son who has joined a warring faction or guerilla army. We often see people on the worst day of their lives and we go to great effort to bring them comfort and compassion.

Our MMM Sisters make sure that elderly or terminally ill people do not die in discomfort or misery. They often find dying family members abandoned and make sure they have a mattress and are not left on cold or wet concrete floors. They ensure they have the medication they need and other medical services. We seek to make everyone we meet at home.

“Wherever we are, whatever we do, may there be in our hearts a space for others to be, so that unafraid, they may experience themselves as loved and so be healed.” - MMM Constitutions

A Windy Day in Drogheda

By Sr. Jo Anne Kelly MMM

I love the wind and I do love a windy day. The wind speaks to me of openness, freedom freshness and abandonment. As a child on a windy day I loved to go out into the middle of a field, loosen the plaits in which my mother had carefully put my long hair and let the wind take my hair in all directions. It was thrilling and I wished that I could fly.

I had no words then to explain how I felt. But I did know that it was going to be painful to sit in front of my mother with her brush and comb, with hair being pulled and tugged to try to remove the tangles and get it back to some kind of tidiness. But it was worth it.

As I sit in our lovely garden now with its variety of beautiful trees and watch the wind whipping through them, I am reminded of the quote in St. John's Epistle. "The Spirit blows where it wills, you hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going, and so it is with everyone born in the Spirit. And we are all born in the Spirit.

Later in life I learnt something of being open to that Spirit. I was in my first mission, doing the work I was trained to do and happy doing it. One day I got a letter with a new assignment to a totally different kind of work for which I felt ill-prepared and very inadequate. This was not in my plan, and perhaps it was the first time I really became aware of being led by the Spirit of God. That change of direction

opened up an unexpected and wonderful new world for me, not without the pain of tugs and pulls and sorting out of many "tangles". But again, it was worth it.

There is a wonder and a wildness about the wind too, a wildness that takes us beyond what we know, what we can see. I love the quote from Pope Francis "Don't let your horizon be so close that it becomes a fence."

Now in my older years I sit in our lovely garden and enjoy the wind playing in the trees, tossing and turning leaves, swaying branches back and forth and I am aware of how many people especially our young people who are giving away their freedom and becoming addicted to drugs, alcohol, gambling and other fleeting pleasures. It is so very tragic.

So as I watch the seagulls spread their wings and glide along, carried by the wind, I pray for all those enslaved by addiction that they come to know the only way to freedom is to stand out, open to the Spirit of God, allow themselves to be carried along by the strength of God's Spirit, the God of Surprises.



Easter Traditions around the World

Easter traditions begin on Palm Sunday with a procession and continue during Holy Week and conclude on Easter Monday.

In **Latin America** Passion Plays are very popular at parish level. Here the crucifixion and death of Jesus is re-enacted. On Holy Saturday, it's typical to re-enact the burning of Judas by hanging an effigy and burning it at the stake. Often the "Judas" of that year is an unpopular local politician!



Image: Diana Contreras, Pixabay

In the Greek island of **Corfu**, old pots are thrown out of the windows on to the streets as an Easter Saturday morning tradition. The noisy custom derived from the Venetians, who on New Year's Day, would throw their old things from the windows in the hopes of receiving new ones for the next year.

In **Greece**, dying eggs red, symbolising Christ's blood, has held strong throughout the millennia as an Easter tradition. The egg in itself is a symbol, as its hard shell represents the sealed tomb of Jesus—the cracking of which

One tradition from **Guatemala** is the "alfombras de Semana Santa" (Carpets of Holy Week). People craft them by hand from piles of sawdust, dyed sands, cut fruit, berries, pine fronds, and corozo palms. Although the carpets require hours of patient labour, they take only seconds to be destroyed by the marching processions on Good Friday. Although temporary, the

joy is clearly in the creation and the annual ritual serves as a metaphor for the cycle of life, death, and rebirth.



symbolises His resurrection from the dead and exit from the tomb. In other Eastern European countries, the eggs are brightly painted and decorated.

In **Poland**, people throw water over each other on Easter Monday. It's known as Wet Monday and happens in many other countries too. It's a tradition is connected with the baptism of a Polish prince hundreds of years ago.

In the village of **Bessières**, in the south of France, people gather every Easter Monday to share a massive omelette! Around 15,000 eggs are used and it's big enough to feed thousands of people. Legend has it that the French Emperor Napoléon Bonaparte liked an omelette he'd eaten in a small town and wanted a huge one made for him and his army. From that a tradition was born.

In **USA**, Easter traditions include treats delivered by the Easter Bunny and Easter Egg Hunts. People often boil eggs and then dye them or paint them a variety of colours. Easter egg hunts are very popular and plastic eggs with toys, sweets or money in them are used.

In **UK and Ireland** we have the tradition of the Hot Cross Bun. They are traditionally eaten over the Easter season to symbolise the crucifixion of Jesus on Good Friday on the cross.



Obituaries Entering into the Fullness of Life



Sr. Mairead Gorman, MMM

was born in Armagh, Northern Ireland in February 1931 and baptised Bridget. She had her schooling locally and in secondary school concentrated

on secretarial skills. She went on to study this later in Belfast. After leaving school, Bridget worked for seven years as a shorthand typist and telephonist in Armagh before deciding to join MMM in 1957.

After her initial religious formation, she made profession of vows in 1959, taking the name Mairead. As she was already a qualified secretary and telephonist her skills were well used in the convent office in Drogheda for the first ten years of her missionary life.

In 1968 she travelled to Uganda, her first overseas assignment. After three years she asked to study nursing and she returned to London where she did a nursing course in the North London School of Nursing, followed by midwifery studies in Drogheda.

On qualifying as a nurse midwife, Sr. Mairead was then assigned to Tanzania for two years before moving on the Ethiopia where she stayed for over twenty years and where she said she had left her heart. As well as nursing in Mikke, Awasa and Dadim, she assumed leadership roles and stayed in Ethiopia up to the final MMM withdrawal from the country in 2010.

On her return to Ireland, Sr. Mairead lived in the community in Ashleigh Heights, Drogheda for several years before moving to the Motherhouse in 2017. At this time, she was working in Aras Mhuire Nursing Home, helping in the office. As her health needs increased, she moved to Aras Mhuire Nursing home in May 2022 for full time nursing care, and she finally died there after a long illness on February 11th 2024, just three days after her 93rd birthday.



Easter Joy

The music ceased. And lightly
Was the sorrow of its passing
Held and felt within my heart.
Yet one with question came response.
The Word, its penetration, seared
In flesh and bone, blood and marrow
Of my being. Became. Transfixed, I watched the void
regenerate as fullness,
Light and utter wholeness, breathing with a oneness,
Echoing the Father's love and pride.
I give thee thanks, O mighty Spirit,
Who soars and glides within the sky of my whole being.
Carry onward, upward into
Light and sun my fragile heart.
I sigh my thanks, my Lord, my God.
I sing with radiance, strong and pure.
For utter nothingness, utter fullness
Where Word breathes once and all is sure.

Sheila C.

Easter Word Search

Easter buns
meal egg
Hot Cross stoop
Mary burst
Spring stone
passion tomb
bunny feast
Pentecost buried
Jesus

L	O	R	E	V	O	S	S	A	P
A	T	S	A	E	F	T	O	P	E
E	C	T	S	O	B	O	P	A	N
M	H	O	T	C	R	O	S	S	T
Y	U	M	E	D	A	P	C	S	E
E	Y	B	R	E	R	M	J	I	C
N	R	N	N	I	B	E	M	O	O
O	A	G	N	R	S	B	U	N	S
T	M	G	P	U	I	J	B	A	T
S	A	E	S	B	B	U	R	S	T

*“Consider the blameless, observe the upright;
a future awaits those who seek peace.”* – Psalm 37:37



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- Share our charism as an MMM Associate

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