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a statement written by
American Catholic Cardinals
entitled "Charting a Moral
Vision of American
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MEDICAL MISSIONARIES OF MARY

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Winter
Newsletter
2026

"I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot. None of us can ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful."

—Mother Teresa

"Listen to the long stillness: New life is stirring. New dreams are on the wing. New Hopes are being readied: Humankind is fashioning a new heart. Humankind is forging a new mind. God is at work. This is the season of Promise."

—Howard Thurman

Dear Friends,

Each time the new year begins, I try to find meaningful ways to encourage myself and others to keep faithful to the journey, even in the midst of the huge issues facing our world today. So, I find the quotes above helpful. "Together we can do something wonderful," "God is at work" and we trust that God will bless our efforts in 2026 to bring about a more loving and just world, where people can heal from wounds and become whole again.

As the new year begins, on behalf of all of the MMM community, sisters, associates, staff, friends, and those we serve, we thank you for your response to our appeals this last year. It has been wonderful and has meant the now 28 health projects we are responsible for have thrived . . . and many people have been healed. So, please know we are deeply grateful to all of you.

As always, we do not want to bother you with mail you do not want. Do let us know if you do not want to receive the newsletters, or perhaps you would prefer an email acknowledgment rather than one by mail. We will give the QR code in the donor card that comes with the newsletters as we found many of you are responding via our online donation site. We are all in different places in our ways of communicating and responding and we do want to honor that.

This winter newsletter focuses on the word "collaboration" and celebrates some of the many ways MMM collaborates with others in our attempts to be a healing presence in our world. As our own foundress, Marie Martin, often said and then the words were put in our Constitutions: *"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 9.10)

So, believing that "New dreams are on the wing" we move into 2026 with faith, hope, love, and deep trust . . . "together we can do something wonderful!"

Gratefully,



Sister Joanne

Sister Joanne Bierl, MMM
Mission Development Director

Moments of Collaboration as We Care for Our Earth and Heal Our World and Build Strong Families

Sr. Clara Chikwana MMM, who is on our central leadership team, recently wrote to me and sent a poem written by one of our younger sisters in formation. She writes: “I got this picture and the poem from one of our Temporary professed Sisters, Berna Nakimuli. I was moved and felt like sharing it with you. She is assigned and working in Tanzania. At the moment she is on home leave in Uganda. Climate challenges seem to have affected them badly. She shares that all the matoke, which is the staple food, dried up and they are just replanting new suckers. Many houses in her village were affected by the heavy winds; the roof of her family house was blown away by heavy storms. Thus, just a small story about how Climate disasters are affecting our world everywhere. And then some of our efforts to counteract that.

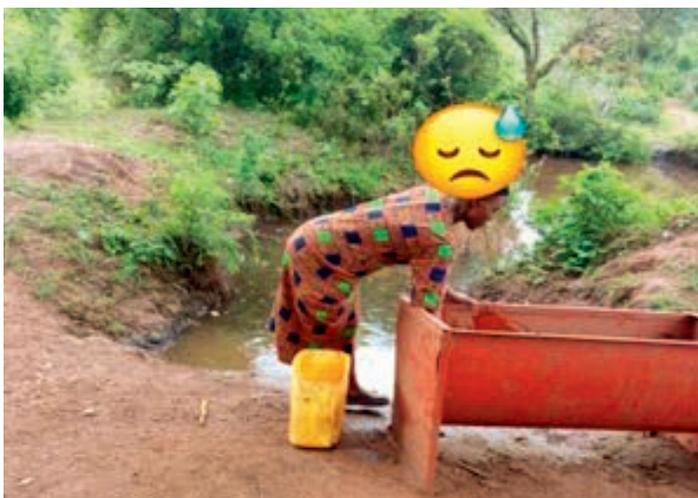
*The water at home . . .
Maybe that's why I am not used to drinking water often.
How do I even get motivated to pour that water into a glass
and drink?*

*People say water is colorless.
But me? I see brown.
So, what color should I call it?*

*When I'm washing dishes,
I can't even tell which bucket is for the first wash
and which is for rinsing.
They all look the same.*

*That's also why I don't wear white clothes
They never remain white.
And maybe that's why I don't like showering.*

*Here I am, putting water for the cows . . .
NB: It actually has a nice taste!*



The water at home.



Joan Gagnon AMMM with her aunt, Sr. Anne Marie Hubbard, MMM.

Joan Gagnon, AMMM, who is an MMM Associate, pictured here with her aunt, Sr. Anne Marie Hubbard, MMM, is active in the Rotary Club in her town of Foxboro, MA. She has found wonderful ways to collaborate with our MMM Associate in Uganda, Charles Matovu, that help care for our earth and her Rotary club has responded with the necessary help. A wonderful example of collaboration across continents and in this mutual concern to care for our earth including the brown water in Uganda!



Uganda Recycling

Sr. Cornelia Udoka, MMM, continues the work of PLAN (Pro-Life Association of Nigeria) began many years ago by our Sister Leonie McSweeney, MMM, in Nigeria. It is about building strong families. She is pictured above at the worldwide International Billings Conference in Rome to mark 70 years since the beginning of Dr. Billings work on fertility and family work in 2023. Cornelia writes: “Personally, it was an exciting moment to be part of that body and to know that MMM in the person of Sr. Leonie McSweeney has been a part of that contribution. The work on Billings Method has helped families to be united in Love. Whether it is used in helping families to achieve pregnancy or helping them to live their family life to fullest without being afraid of pregnancy or in selecting the sex of the baby they desire or counseling them at moments of crisis. In my experience so far, married couples who use this method do it with the desire to love and create harmony in their families.



Sr. Cornelia Udoka, MMM, in Rome with participants of Conference.

As 2026 begins, I am so happy to be a part of this program to strengthen family life in Nigeria.” Cornelia works out of the Family Life Center in Itam, Nigeria, where our work to heal the effects of VVF is also centered.

And yet another moment of collaboration! On Thursday, November 13, 2025, the Midwest Augustinians gathered at St. Jude Parish in New Lenox for a Mass of Thanksgiving honoring Pope Leo XIV, formerly Cardinal Robert Prevost, O.S.A., and for the Affiliation Ceremony welcoming sixteen new members into the extended Augustinian family. Pictured below are Fr. Tony Pizzo, Prior of the Midwest Augustinians along with our Concepción and Alvaro Saldivar. Their parish in Chicago, St. Clare’s, is run by the Augustinian Fathers and for decades, Connie, AMMM, her husband, and three sons have been a part of the Augustinian family, as well as the MMM family where Connie is both a staff member and associate! The award reads: “Considering your friendship and diligent cooperation with the Augustinian family of the Province of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Chicago, and especially your enduring commitment, closeness, and support to our community of the convent of Saint Clare of Montefalco, Chicago, and your identification with the Augustinian spirit and ideals of unity, truth, and charity, as well as the countless services rendered, we believe it is fitting to reciprocate by making you participants in the spiritual benefits of our Order.”



Connie and Alvaro with Fr. Tony at awards ceremony.

And yet more collaboration! Our “Circle of Friends” based in Medford, MA, is just completing a fundraiser for our Palliative Care Program in Tanzania, which has grown and expanded throughout the diocese of Singida to include more than 200 patients on a given day. It is wonderful and deeply meaningful work. Pictured here is Sr. Marian Scena MMM who is director of the Program.



Sr. Marian Scena, MMM.

And finally, here in Somerville, MA, home to MMM, our Sister Liana de Jesus, MMM, is deeply involved in pastoral care at St. Anthony’s parish where she is pictured with parishioners dancing in the celebration for Our Lady of Guadalupe in December 2025. The parish is home to many people from around the world who now call the USA their home.

These are only a few examples of working with others to bring about a world that is kinder, more accepting, open to healing, and to be healed. You collaborate with us . . . and together we are making a difference.



Sr. Liana de Jesus, MMM, with parishioners on feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Liana in blue feathers).

“WE SEEK TO
BUILD A TRULY
JUST AND
LASTING PEACE,
THAT PEACE
WHICH JESUS
PROCLAIMED IN
THE GOSPEL.”

”

MMM



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