

Marist Mission Today

Number 87

Marist Missionary Sisters

Fall/Winter 2020

Dear Partners in Mission,

The last seven months have presented us with unpredicted challenges to our Marist Missionary Sisters communities

locally, nationwide, and worldwide, in the form of Covid-19 pandemic. None of us were prepared to face the dramatic changes that a worldwide lockdown would bring, as well as the adversity it would place on our daily lives.

However, God is always good; He is there still to guide and journey with us. Pope Francis urges us to be hopeful in this time of uncertainty: "The Lord asks us from His cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look toward those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame that never falters and let us allow hope to be rekindled" in our midst in this time of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

As a Region, we continue to support our Sisters in Peru, Jamaica, and here in the United States through prayers and virtual communications. We encourage each other to take precautions and follow the respective country's guidelines and safety standards.

I want to thank you all for continuing to share your resources over the past year. This financial support enables the Region of the Americas to serve God's mission with necessary programs and projects that so many who less fortunate have come to appreciate and enjoy.

Blessings,

Sr. Helen Muller, smsm



Pastoral Ministry in Chulucanas



Sister Gladys Enanoria smsm, originally from the Philippines, works with a pastoral team in the diocese of Chulucanas in Peru.

SHAPING FAITH IN THE DIGITAL WORLD BROUGHT BY COVID 19

Sister Gladys, smsm

The Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has posed significant challenges at the Pastoral Center of Chulucanas since the pastoral program was temporarily suspended. The crisis has invited us to open new doors of opportunities as we respond to the needs of the church and of the diocese amidst the pandemic.

For the past months the formation team has been dedicated to reconnecting with parish teams: formation courses were geared more towards topics on healing, compassion, charity, and pastoral love. Gospel reflections and prayers were shared and posted by video link, and through text messaging on cellphones to bring spiritual support to the believers and communities who were denied a place of worship.



Pastoral Ministers meet with the new Bishop of Chulucanas, Bishop Cristóbal Bernardo Mejía Corral, in Chulucanas, wearing masks and practicing “social distancing” because of the pandemic.

SHAPING FAITH... (continued)

The use of different forms of social media, websites, TV and radio has been employed despite the problem of access to digital resources in rural areas; the pastoral center has turned to technology and is gradually becoming a “digital faith center”.

A couple of days, I was invited to direct a reflection time for catechists and liturgists, it was attended by 80 faithful. The theme was: “Catechists and liturgists: bearers of the love of God that conquers fear.” Though it was a virtual encounter, it was a moment of grace for me; just listening to their voices and seeing them on the screen with their eager faces after some time of isolation spoke a lot to me. The encounter gave me a feeling of solidarity and a sense of hope.

As we continue to find new ways that are most necessary and meaningful to the people at this time, it is my hope that this new digital world, will also usher us into a new and more meaningful ways of evangelizing that would inspire us to put our faith into action both “online and offline.” May God grant us a “COVID-19 grace period” to do this.

May our Mother Mary continue to inspire us amidst all the challenges we are facing. Sister Gladys, smsm

Coping with COVID in Jamaica



Sister Teresia Tinanisolo, from Fiji, is Administrator of the Guadalupe Skills Training Center in Kingston, Jamaica

When our Government of Jamaica first announced all the Regulations and Protocols to be followed during this time of Covid 19, I was most affected by the Regulation to “STAY HOME” since I’m now over 70 years old. I missed the people, my Church community, our students and most of all just the common folks I meet on the streets. Two of us in community come under this Regulation to “STAY HOME.” I’ve never been so confined in my whole life as I was during those first few

months. For the first time I felt like a “Prisoner at home.”

The physical isolation sharpened my awareness of the sufferings of people all over the world who are in the same situation because of Covid 19. This has given me courage to go on. The first time we were able to attend Mass on Sundays the physical distancing continued. This time I was made to sit six feet away from my sister or brother. I could only wave and bow to my fellow worshipers at the kiss of Peace and after Mass. When I finally decided to go over to the other side of the Church at the end of Mass to say Hello to Cecilia, a Lay Marist, she said to me, “Thank you Sister for coming over to say Hello to me.” Her words of appreciation made me know that she also was missing being close to people. It reminded me of how true the words of the hymn are, “We are companions on the journey...”

At the beginning of March when the first case of Covid 19 was discovered in Jamaica, the Government acted very swiftly and announced that all schools were to be closed. In our case we have our students doing Home Nursing and a second group doing Home Furnishing and Decorating. Both groups were only into their fourth week of a twelve- week course

The schools “Shut Down” meant NO income for us, as we depend entirely on School Fees to pay our Staff and bills. I’m most grateful to our Internet and Telephone Provider for agreeing to temporarily suspend service until School reopens. During the months of May & June our Regional Administration assisted us in paying the salaries of two of our lay staff, we Thank You sincerely, Sisters, as it was impossible to continue employing both women, I had to make a difficult decision to lay off one and cut the days of the second to two days weekly.

Now I am more dependent on the Providence of God and the goodness of people. Last Sunday at the end of Mass, one of our Board members handed me an envelope which contained \$15,000.00 Jamaican money donated by a Church member. This gift from Heaven is just what I needed to be able to pay one person for two weeks and a little over for our electricity bill. THANK YOU to our Good Samaritan.

ALL THESE HAPPENINGS have made me more



Sister Saane (3rd from left) with graduates of the Home Nursing Course at the Guadalupe Center in Kingston, Jamaica.

aware of the many gifts I have received, rather than the difficulties I encounter because of Covid 19. I am more dependent on God’s Providence and have a better understanding and EMPATHY for our brothers and sisters everywhere who suffer from the effects of the COVID 19 Virus. God Bless us all.

Those who have gone before us....



Sr. Therese
LAPOINTE,
smsm
11/ 28/1925 –
3 /12/ 2020



Sr. Mary
Elizabeth
BONIA,
smsm
8/12/22-
3/26/2020



Sr. Catherine
KEOGH,
smsm
4/22/23-
5/15/2020

Read about the lives of these and other SMSM Sisters at:

<http://www.smsmsisters.org/index.php?a=6>



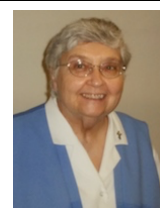
Sr. Mercedes
KIRST,
smsm
5/10/27-
7/30/2020



Sr. Mary
Michaeline
MEDZIHRADSKY,
smsm
4/17/1921 –
3/ 17/2020



Sr. Mary
Tekakwitha
HEMESATH,
smsm
9/20/33-
5/13/2020



Sr. Mary
Philothea
BLAKE,
smsm
6/3/30-
10/27/2020



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Learn more: Visit our websites: maristsmsm.org & smsmsisters.org
Contact: vocations@maristsmsm.org

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- Download past copies of Marist Mission Today

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If you are planning your bequests or memorial gifts you can help us to continue to bring the good news of God's love to those in need in many parts of the world.

Our official name and address for legal documents:

Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary
349 Grove Street,
Waltham, MA 02453



Dear Friends,

At this time of giving Thanks we are mindful of your faithful and generous support through the years. We know that you have all been impacted by the COVID-19 Virus too. We want you to know that we pray for you twice a day as we gather at our central house in Waltham for reciting the rosary and for evening prayer. May you be open to the good God offers you each day so as to have the peace and love God wants for you.

"Most gracious Virgin Mary, be mindful of our benefactors, friends and all those who do us good." Amen.

The Marist Missionary Sisters

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