

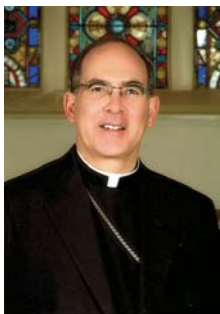
¡Digo Sí!

Occasional Publication

Summer 2006

2ND ANNUAL FAITH PROMISE DINNER

We are excited to announce the second annual Faith Promise Dinner to be held November 3, 2006 at Abbington Banquets in Glen Ellyn. We are especially happy to announce that our new bishop, J. Peter Sartain will give the keynote address. Presently serving as the chairperson for the U.S. Bishops Committee on Home Missions, he will share a deep affinity with our work. This is a great opportunity for us to share our story with him and for him to challenge us to even greater work. The focus of this year's dinner will be on the service of the Catholic Construction Corps in the storm ravaged Gulf Coast.



Bishop J. Peter Sartain
Newly installed bishop of Joliet

Remember how the Faith Promise Dinner works. All will be welcomed, as there will be no charge for those attending. The prayerful close of the evening will offer the attendees the opportunity to participate in the missions by giving a faith-filled promise of prayerful and financial support. Typically, financial pledges take the form of monthly donations.

At this dinner we hope to raise the needed funds to subsidize the costs of our missionaries and to underwrite our various projects for the poor.

Our evening will begin with a reception at 6:30, and our dinner at 7:15. Please plan now to attend this evening of excellent food, warm fellowship with friends, inspiring testimonies, educational slides, grateful presentations, challenging messages, and foot tapping jazz.

We will be sending invitations, but you can also call the office 815-834-4028 to inform us of your desire to enjoy this evening at the Abbington. Abbington Banquets is on Butterfield Road at Route 53 in Glen Ellyn.

BECOMING A MISSIONARY CHURCH

BY THOMAS L. GARLITZ

When I first arrived in the Joliet Diocese, now fourteen years ago, I stated to a gathering of pastors that my goal was to see every parish with one long-term missionary serving in the field. That would mean 120 long-term missionaries representing this Joliet Church around the globe. To this date, only several of our parishes have had members serving terms of a year or longer on the mission field.

The good news, however, is the success of our short-term missions. Through the Partnership In Mission, the Joliet Diocese has sent 1000 missionaries to serve on two week missions in various locations around the world over the past dozen years. This is truly a marvelous work and a wonder. This experience

(see Becoming a Missionary Church on Page 2)

LETTER OF THANKS

From Leonardo Y. Medroso, DD
Bishop of Borongan, Philippines

"...I know full well how much you have done to my diocese. Up to now you are still in the lips of my people, talking about you and your mission, so deep indeed is the impression that you have left behind. Memories of the professional approach to medicine, of your proficiency in handling the patients, your efficiency and the seemingly easy way of handling the scalpel and all, are there to stay. But there were small things that may escape the eyes of many, but not of the patients themselves and those who have the ability to perceive. I have heard of teary eyed patients looking up to you mumbling the word of "salamat" (thank you) to you; of doctors, nurses and other staff seeing you fervently praying together before you put on the gown, the gloves and all; of auxiliaries who saw faith in the way you handle the scalpel and the needed, stitched the wounds and apply the medicine; of relatives who were deeply moved by the way you visited their operated ones, the manner you talked to them, consoled them. Yes, these did not escape the observation of my people, making your second medical mission "bulig" a truly memorable one. In their name, may I kindly express my sincerest gratitude to you."

Upcoming Missions

Dates for 2007-2008

CHECK IT OUT!

Available on the website
www.paxjoliet.org/missions

We'd love to have you join
us !!!

BECOMING A MISSIONARY CHURCH

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

has been transformative not only for those individuals who have participated, but for the parishes who have supported them with prayers, encouragement, and often finances.

But what of the vision of one long-term missionary for each parish? Has experience proven this to be a pipe dream, and not a vision? My wife comes from the Mennonite Church, a faith tradition that is missionary to the very core. In visiting various Mennonite congregations in years past, it always seemed to me that every congregation had someone serving someplace in mission. A picture of their missionary might be posted in the back of the church, or prayer reminders would be printed in the bulletin, or a special collection was being taken to support their work. Recently I did a study just to see if the facts would bear out my impressions. One Mennonite mission board, facilitating the work of several small conferences, the Mennonite equivalent of Catholic dioceses, comprised of about 27,000 members, reported 239 full-time missionaries. That represents one missionary for every 112 members. If we were to take this formula to the Joliet Diocese, which numbers 660,000, we would be supporting an astounding 5893 full-time missionaries! That's right, Five Thousand, Eight Hundred and Ninety Three Missionaries! My meager 120 no longer seems worthy even to be called a vision.

"When Christ is not at the center of our work the fire of mission grows cold. If we are to become a Missionary Church we must first embrace the centrality of Christ."

Somewhere between the actual number of three missionaries, my goal of 120, or the application of the Mennonite formula of 5893, is God's vision of mission for the Joliet Diocese. In future articles, I will explore some of the challenges to discovering this vision.

- How can people be sent, if they are not first called?
- How do we properly form those who are called?
- How do we finance a missionary movement?
- How do we do Catholic mission in an increasingly individualistic and congregational church?

The first and primary challenge we must face, however, which I will address in this article, is the need for a scripturally based

theology of mission.

The Mission of Christ

Our theology of mission must be challenged by Scripture and the wisdom of the Church's tradition rooted in the experience of missionary saints such as Francis, Xavier, Daniel Comboni, Blessed Damien, and Mother Teresa. Recent years have seen a drift toward an understanding of mission that is secular in nature, a human program encouraging social, economic and political development as the sum total of mission, and either equating this progress with the Reign of God, or dismissing the need for the missionary's involvement in a transcendent message altogether. The proper respect for other Religions and the acknowledgement of the presence of God everywhere and in all has eclipsed the belief in the uniqueness of Christ and the need for Redemption. It is true that the Reign of God cannot be confined to the Church, but neither can it be separated from it.

The work of the Partnership In Mission certainly attends to temporal needs, but not to acknowledge the spiritual needs of those we serve is to do them a great disservice. It is to not recognize the complete nature of our humanity - body, soul and spirit. Do we not sense our own need for a Savior? Do we not testify to the awakening and deepening of our faith during our time in short-term mission? Then how can we not desire that others find the fullness of Salvation that is theirs in Christ as well? All people, whatever their culture, whatever their religion or lack thereof, have this spiritual hunger. Mission is a work of the Spirit. It can not be reduced to a human endeavor only. When we lose the centrality of Christ in our message and work, when we diminish the need for redemption and salvation, we lose our sense of urgency; we lose the eternal necessity of the call to missionary activity. When Christ is not at the center of our work the fire of mission grows cold. If we are to become a Missionary Church we must first embrace the centrality of Christ. Missionaries can not be ashamed of the Cross.

(See "On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate - *Redemptoris Missio*" chapters 1-2-3)

ALABAMA MISSION TRIP RESTORES HOMES AND HOPE

BY MILT & ROSALIE HONEL AND EDITED BY PAM SMITH

Katrina victims in Alabama received a helping hand recently from a group of hardworking Mary Queen of Heaven Parish (Elmhurst) volunteers.

Working through the Catholic Construction Corps of the Diocese's National Disaster Relief Program Katrina Recovery Mission, 13 parishioners traveled in January 2006 to Bayou La Batre, a town of under 3000 people located about 30 miles southwest of Mobile along the shores of the Mississippi Sound.

In this area, known as the seafood capital of Alabama, homes mostly sustained rain and wind damage, and many homeowners had no insurance coverage or money for repairs.

Participants **Sue Butler, Bob Duda, Rosalie and Milt Honel, Jinny and Dick Lamermeier, John Lyons, Lorna Miressi, Linda Rybski, Greig Siedor, Mary Alice Steck, Bob Wilson and Joe Winblad** joined 30 other US and Canadian volunteers to tackle minor structural damage. Divided into six crews, the

(see Alabama Mission Trip Restores Homes and Hope Page 3)

MISSION WORKERS TOUCH MANY LIVES IN QUITO

BY MARY JANE TRINKUS AND EDITED BY PAM SMITH

Construction and medical teams from the Diocese of Joliet joined forces recently for a productive mission trip to Ecuador.

In a very poor barrio in Quito, a four-man construction corps set their sights on a local school where seven teachers and the principal instruct 157 students in grades one through seven.

A small, dark shack at the school housed a breakroom/lunchroom for the teachers and a two-burner hot plate used to prepare warm snacks for the students, who waited outside to receive their food through a little window. For eight years, school leaders hoped to replace the shack with a room where a real lunch could be cooked and where students could eat indoors, sheltered from the weather.

The construction team partnered with local laborers to haul concrete block, sift and transport sand in wheelbarrows, and install in a concrete floor. Working in tandem with their Ecuadorian brothers, they made great progress toward accomplishing their goal of building a kitchen and dining area for the school.

While they worked, the medical team – including two physicians, a nurse practitioner, pharmacist and three nurses – with a local physician and nurse staffed a newly opened medical clinic, located above a new soup kitchen in the barrio.

“Word had spread through local churches that we were coming,” explains Mary Jane Trinkus, one of the nursing members of the team and author of a follow-up report on the mission, “and the response was overwhelming. We worked every day, then opened the clinic again in the evening.”

Lines of people were waiting to see the doctors when the clinic opened at 8:30 AM, and each morning the lines were longer.



Outside the clinic, people were waiting to see the doctors every morning.

“As the days went by,” she says, “desperation grew. Everyone wanted to see us. The night before our last day in the clinic, people came with blankets at 11 PM, built a bonfire and spent the night in the cold to be sure they would get in.” Accommodations for the mission teams

were simple: all 11 members shared a large, unheated room next to the clinic, with sleeping bags to ward off 40-degree nighttime temperatures and curtains to separate the women from the men. The workers were grateful that the three bathrooms they used had hot showers.

Mission members rose at about 6 AM to the natural alarm clock of barking dogs and crowing roosters and made their own breakfasts of cereal, bread and fruit. Lunches and dinners were prepared by two cooks, Rosa and Julia, who served the workers in the soup kitchen. In all, the medical team saw 420 patients

and filled 600 prescriptions with medicines they brought with them. Patients were charged \$1 for each visit including medications, although no one without money was turned away. The fees are used to sustain the clinic.

All three projects - the school construction, clinic and soup kitchen - were financed through the fundraising efforts and generous donations of Fr. Don Kenny, a retired Joliet Diocesan priest who has served as a missionary in Quito for the past three years.

The medical team was disappointed to not be able to see everyone who needed treatment, but gratified that the people of

(see Mission Workers Touch Many Lives in Quito Page 4)

Alabama Mission Trip Restores Homes and Hope

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

workers stripped roofs and laid down new shingles, replaced damaged drywall and installed new or repaired windows.

Room and board for the volunteers was provided by the Menonite Disaster Service, a faith-based agency which responds to disasters by providing volunteer labor for cleanup and home reconstruction. MDS places special emphasis on helping low-income families, single parents, the elderly and the disabled.

In his welcome to staff and volunteers, Bob Weichman, Director of the MDS site, charged participants with befriending the homeowners they would help. “Building relationships,” he emphasized, “is as important as the work to be done.” According to volunteers Rosalie and Milt Honel, the typical workday

at Bayou La Batre began at 6 AM. Workers packed their own lunches then enjoyed breakfast followed by devotions before gathering tools and equipment to depart for the worksite via MDS trucks. Work began at about 8:45 AM and continued until 4:30 PM with morning, afternoon and lunch breaks. Following dinner at around 6 PM, crew members reported on the accomplishments of the day. The fellowship of working together - and even a friendly rivalry among the crews which generated much laughter - was an important part of this mission trip. Volunteers returned home about a week later tired, happy to be home and most of all thankful for the opportunity to reach out to the people of Bayou La Batre.

MISSION WORKERS TOUCH MANY LIVES IN QUITO

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

the barrio would be well-served by this new clinic - open weekdays and staffed by Ecuadorian Dr. Salazar and his nurse Sr. Anita - and would no longer have to travel 45 minutes by bus for medical care. At the soup kitchen, also open weekdays, the poor could receive at least one nutritious hot meal a day. And the school's new kitchen and dining area is a dream-coming-true for both students and teachers.

Trinkus says, "As we said our goodbyes, we were asked 'Will you return?' With warm smiles we were able to say, 'Yes, we will be back.' "It was a good mission."



Quito Medical Mission Team 2006

PHILIPPINE MISSION SERVES THE POOREST OF THE POOR

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

(During the next leg of the trip, by bus to Borongan, the group stopped for a quick meal at McDonalds.) *They wanted us to have our last bit of American food before we reached our destination...The McDonalds was located on the waterfront, and it had a full wall of windows that gave a great view of the boats, people, buses, stores and traffic...A young boy appeared at the window...He stared right into my eyes, put up his hands and said "Please." I could not hear him through the window, but to my heart he was loud and clear...It bothered me that I couldn't help him. When I sensed he was gone, I looked at the window only to find just a handprint left on the glass...That impression of his hand left an impression on my heart.*

(Back on the bus, the group passed through towns and saw many one-room shacks on stilts. Some of these homes were built with pieces of aluminum or wooden boards, but many had walls of tree limbs and palm tree roofs, with a chair or table as the only furniture. Houses with plaster looked out of place by comparison. Most homes had laundry hanging out to dry and a rooster in the yard.) *At one point, I happened to see a shack on stilts with one room and no door. There was a naked child about 2-3 years old standing in the doorway with not a care. I realized that this is their way of living. They seem to be happy and do not realize they are poor. The accommodations are poor, but you see families together, laughing, working together, visiting.*

(With the ocean on their east side, the group saw abundant coconut and banana trees, ferns and beautiful, unusual flowers.) *At least once an hour it would rain, then get sunny again. The road had many potholes, and we swerved back and forth in the bus as the driver dodged the holes.*

It was the Feast of the Infant of Prague. The tradition is to be cleansed with water...One small town had flags up...villagers were walking on the street, and we were told they were going to the ocean to be cleansed. Children along the street were throwing buckets of water on our bus...cleansing us. My window was open so I could view the landscape, and everyone on the bus chuckled when I got wet from a child's cleansing.

(The group arrived in Borongan, settled into the hotel and showered.) *We took a walk to see the hospital that we would be working at...It was run down but functional. There were dogs lounging on the hallway floor in front of the nurses station...lizards on the ceiling. No air conditioning, no privacy. No mattresses on the metal spring beds...patients had pillows if their family brought them one. There were open courtyards, and large mosquitoes had an easy access. So did the flies. The OR (operating room) was not what I expected. The equipment was mostly old and worn. The tables were wooden and so were the footstools and Mayo stands...The ER (emergency room) was very small with about 6-8 beds.*

(Workdays began early. After breakfast, the group walked to the hospital where Fr. Ernie held mass in the hallway near the OR. The volunteers along with visitors, nurses, doctors, and patients in their gowns and holding their IV bags all prayed together.) *I truly felt that God was present with us in the hallway.*

(During their days at the hospital, the team treated hundreds of patients and performed dozens of surgeries. During one surgery, Denise assisted in the repair of a hernia for a patient named Mario.) *He is a coconut farmer with four children...medium build, a nice smile, spoke fairly good English and was supported by his mother at the bedside...They were both very appreciative of our work, and they thanked me many times. I got a picture of them in the recovery room. His mother clung onto me for the picture, and that memory will last a lifetime. One time during the day, I was visited by Ruby Ann. She is a five-year-old little girl.....(whose) brother had been at the hospital over two weeks for diarrhea. She saw me the first day, came up to me, took my hand and placed the outer top part to her forehead. Later, I learned that this is a sign of respect. Every time I saw her, she did that. (When time permitted, the volunteers explored the area and sampled local foods, drinks and culture. A few members of the group attended a cockfight.)*

(see Philippine Mission Serves the Poorest of the Poor Page 6)

PHILIPPINE MISSION SERVES THE POOREST OF THE POOR

BY DENISE FELKER AND EDITED BY PAM SMITH

Many sick people in the remote town of Borongan, in Eastern Samar in the Philippines, have nowhere to turn for medical treatment.

The province hospital requires patients to purchase all necessary medicines, IV fluids and tubing, and even gloves before they may be admitted, and those without money are turned away. Patients with life-threatening wounds or illnesses may be admitted to the facility, but surgery will only be done if they can buy supplies. If you cannot pay, you are left to die – likely on hospital beds which are no more than wire springs topped with vinyl mats or cardboard.

A Diocese of Joliet medical mission team recently traveled to this small town and saw why the policy is necessary: The hospital has no option because it is as poor as the people. This is an impoverished area, and funds sent quarterly by the government run out quickly.

According to a report by team leaders Vic and Mary Jane Trinkus, the 16 group members included five physicians, four nurses, four nurse technicians, a home health care worker, a priest and a nun, some of whom were making a return trip to the province. The skills and medicines they brought to Borongan touched the lives of the people, as the group worked for two weeks to perform dozens of surgeries and treat hundreds of men, women and children.

During this mission, the team built a strong relationship with four Filipinos who are also touching the lives of the poor in Borongan. Known as the Oikos Sisters, these women turned away from their lives as a businesswoman, a pharmacist, a nurse and a musical director to take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The Oikos Sisters have opened a rescue home for abused children and children whose parents have died or who are too poor to care for them. At present, they house 16 children from 10 months to 17 years of age.

The Sisters sleep on straw mats on the floor in one room with the children. After tending to daily chores, they go into the community to ask for food for the children.

The Trinkuses explain that the sisters “depend totally on donations and God’s grace. Their doors are open to anyone who knocks, and they admit any child who needs their help.

“To those who come asking for food because they are hungry, the sisters give half of what they have, faithfully living and believing that God will provide. They are the Mother Therasas of the Philippines.”



Mary Jane Trinkus spends time with the kids from the rescue home.

The medical mission team looks forward to visiting the town again in 2007. “We go to give,” says Mary Jane, “but return knowing we’ve received so much more.”

Notes from Borongan

Nurse Denise Felker’s journey to the Philippines began when a favorite patient died, and the patient’s wife asked Denise to find someone who could use their leftover equipment, drugs and supplies. Her search to fulfill this request led Denise to the Joliet Diocese, where she learned about the work of the Diocese Partnership in Mission. Shortly after, with the support of her family and employer, she submitted an application for a surgical mission, and in late October she was accepted.

Preparations for the January 2006 mission to Borongan began in November. In several meetings over the following weeks, Denise met other team members, including some veterans of a medical mission to the area the previous year who explained the goal of the mission, Philippine culture, how to act and dress during the trip, and what to expect.

As the January 13 departure date approached, Denise’s friends and family helped her prepare for her trip. Coworkers gave her gifts including a photo diary, survival kit (with, among other things, Tootsie Rolls and toilet paper) and a guardian angel pin.

From her daughter Laura, Denise received a journal. She captured her experiences during the Borongan mission in the journal and shares some excerpts here.

(12-13-2005 - one month before departure)

We (team members) are all so different, yet all the same in heart. I think this will be the best spiritual experience of my life.

(Getting off the plane in Manila following a 41 hour trip from O’hare via Tokyo), *It was hot and humid even at 4:30 in the morning. It was still dark out and the moon was full...and seemed clearer and more beautiful than I’ve ever seen it before.*

When we got our luggage...we were amazed at the overstuffed duffel bags (containing medicines and supplies). How fortunate we have been to get so many people to donate so many supplies.

(In a smaller airport, the group waited for their next flight.) *Fr. Sunny set up for a morning mass. It seemed strange to have mass in an airport lobby while people were boarding for their flights. The airport employees were very respectful of our mass and did not use the overhead paging when boarding was ready. Instead, they held up signs with the name of the flight. Many people waiting for their flights joined the mass.*

(see Philippine Mission Serves the Poorest of the Poor Page 4)

**DIOCESE OF JOLIET
PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION**

402 S. Independence Blvd
Romeoville, IL 60446
Phone: 815-834-4028
Fax: 815-838-8129

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NUMBER 7
ROMEDEVILLE, IL

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

**We're on the web!
www.paxjoliet.org**



PHILIPPINE MISSION SERVES THE POOREST OF THE POOR

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Some people left right away because the fights were brutal. Even though I felt bad for the birds, I wanted to experience the culture's sport. I suppose the cockfight could be considered a cultural sport like bullfighting, greyhound races, fox-hunting or even boxing...The roosters that met their fate will end up as someone's dinner. Nothing goes to waste here.

(One evening, team members went to visit the Oikos Sisters at their Rescue Home. Denise brought the big bag of Tootsie Rolls from her survival kit, and the group stopped at a market along the way to buy powdered milk, crackers, tuna, soap and shampoo for the Sisters and children.)

(We were) greeted warmly by the children. They were all ages. Some had disabilities, but they were all well taken care of. They were full of love and God's grace. They sang to us, and it made us cry to see how children with very little could have such big hearts.

They had a nice meal prepared, and we ate together. We played with the children, held them, acted silly and eventually sang for them. We sang Old McDonald, and we did the hokey-pokey for them... What a wonderful night.

(Denise was deeply impressed by many of the people she met

during the mission and by Fr. Ernie in particular.) *Fr. Ernie was our spiritual leader...a quiet, soft-spoken man...The patients really respected him, and he was always trying to find a way to help. He said mass every morning at the hospital, and I cried at every one. Mass will never be the same again. He was responsible for helping me find my God, and I know that God spoke to me through him. The children thought he looked like Santa. I think Fr. Ernie will be a person I will never forget.*

(Following many days of hard work and experiences that were both wrenching and joyous, the work of the mission team came to a close and the group said their goodbyes. For Denise, the bus trip from Borongan was very different from her trip to the town nearly two weeks before.)

Now that we were used to the poverty, it allowed me to observe the beauty and not the poverty...My heart was heavy with the thought of not seeing our friends on a daily basis any more. The sounds of the sisters singing at mass, the patients standing alongside of us at mass, the sounds of the roosters and the ocean waves will be behind us now. The shacks along the way now seemed beautiful as I appreciated the work they put into their homes and their family going about their daily chores. I appreciated their ways and understood their lifestyle a little better.