



## CENTER for MISSION

*Society for the Propagation of the Faith / St. Paul and Minneapolis*

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith  
777 Forest Street  
St. Paul, MN 55106 - 3857  
651.222.6556 [www.centerformission.org](http://www.centerformission.org)

NON PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
TWIN CITIES MN  
PERMIT NO 594



# Inspired

*Stories of encountering Christ in global mission*

Fall 2020

*"Some give to the missions by going,  
others go to the missions by giving.  
Without both, there would be no  
mission."*

Immersion Encounters

Discerning to Go

Serving in Mission

Returning from Mission

World Mission Sunday: October 18



Please visit our website:  
[www.centerformission.org](http://www.centerformission.org)  
as interesting content is  
continually added.

Save postage, you can now  
donate online by credit card.

If you have received this mailing in error, or would like to  
discontinue receiving newsletters from us, please contact:  
Bonnie Curry-Gabel at [curry-gabelb@archspm.org](mailto:curry-gabelb@archspm.org) or 651-291-4451

# Inspired

Fall 2020

*Stories of encountering Christ in global mission*



## The Missionary Vocation: Why do they go?

By Deacon Mickey Friesen  
Director, Center for Mission



*Center for  
Mission Director  
since 2001.*

There is a saying in the Church which states:

"Some give to the missions by going, others go to the

missions by giving. Without both, there would be no mission."

It is true that nobody enters the mission field alone. There is an important bond between the sending Church, the missionary and the receiving Church. Over the years, I have had the pleasure of meeting many Catholics who have left the comforts of home to give witness to Christ in overseas countries. When I ask them about their own call to mission, they talk about the inspiration and faith of their families or parishes, they talk about how their experiences of the Sacraments led them to seek out the communion that exists across the many borders that separate us. Still others are moved by the stories of returning missionaries who give themselves in service to brothers and sisters in foreign lands, accompanying people who live on the edges of society and are the ones that the Bible calls "the least of these" that Jesus spoke about.

Often missionaries share about a kind of restlessness that will not subside. They feel drawn to the ends

of the earth. Whatever the inspiration, missionaries hear God calling them to go and witness to the Good News of Jesus.

Missionaries also speak about how important it is to know they are supported by their families, churches and mission sending communities. They often depend on the material support from their sending group, but they also find great encouragement in the prayers and spiritual support of those at home who are in solidarity with their mission.

Missionaries who serve overseas eventually become living bridges between their home church and the adopted community of their service. They accept a certain level of homelessness by not totally belonging to either the community in which they



serve or the home they left. Yet they belong to both. When returning from serving communities in foreign lands, missionaries

often discover this homelessness and "lostness" in different ways.

In this newsletter, we continue to introduce you to our missionaries serving around the world. We offer examples of discernment, active mission and returning home, to provide the spectrum of mission encounters. Thank you to all those who accept God's call to leave and serve. And thanks to all those who give and make it possible for them to go.

All these stories are a good way to introduce the World Mission Sunday celebration on October 18.

## Immersion Encounters: COVID Status

By Eric Simon  
Mission Promotions Manager



*Eric Simon  
manages  
communications  
and development  
at the Center  
for Mission. He  
also organizes*

*Immersion Trips and experiences.*

The COVID-19 pandemic at home and overseas has unfortunately caused us to assess our ability to offer mission encounters to mission communities globally. And unfortunately it has resulted in putting our immersion and partnership visits "on hold." We still communicate virtually with many mission dioceses, but it is certainly a different encounter.

Our primary concern is always for our delegates from the Archdiocese and the communities we are visiting. So, at this point, two visits - Jamaica and Alaska - scheduled for the spring of 2021 have been delayed until 2022. This postponement has also been at the request of the mission receiving communities.

We continue to support struggling communities and missionaries in many other ways, and this newsletter highlights a few of those we are aiding.

If you would like additional information regarding mission encounters, please contact Deacon Mickey Friesen who can help with discernment and experience fit. He can be reached at [friesenm@archspm.org](mailto:friesenm@archspm.org), or 651.291.4445.

## Discerning to Go

By Sr. Nikopoia

Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará



*Therese Mary-anne Klobe grew up in Edina and attended Our Lady of Grace Grade School and St. Agnes High School in St. Paul. She has taken vows as a SSVM sister.*

I was raised in a devoted Catholic family; praying the family rosary daily, and praying the Stations of the Cross. I never imagined leaving Minnesota, nor living more than five miles from home. But God had called me to Himself as His spouse.

The initial call came at my high school graduation party when my Grandma asked if I wanted to be a nun. My immediate response was, "No way



Grandma!" When I turned around, I had a sinking feeling in my heart that THIS WAS my vocation. Believing common perceptions that all nuns were old, never traveled, never saw children and only prayed all day, I avoided my vocation calling thinking I could enter the convent when I reached 85 years old!

Instead, I filled my time with enjoying traveling, playing sports, and working with children. I believed I would never be able to do this in the convent.



I encountered SSVM sisters while chaperoning high school girls at a Vocation Night at the University of St. Thomas. I was surprised to experience the joy, youthfulness and wonderful blue and gray habit of the sisters. God in His Mercy, preserved my vocation and I finally took a leap of faith and trust joining the Servants of the Lord in Maryland as a novice.

In 2015, at Holy Family Church in St. Louis Park, I professed perpetual vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and Marian Slavery and promised to accept missionary adventure. I became a missionary sister of the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará and received my new name: Our Lady,

Sr. Maria Nikopoia. My new name was a Greek avocation meaning "Mary, the Bringer of Victory."

All my fears had been dispelled upon entering the convent to find sisters much younger than me who played sports, taught children and pilgrimaged all over the world.

After my formation in Washington, DC and Italy, my first assignment was as a missionary at a parish in Silicon Valley.

I now serve as a missionary sister in Guyana, South America where God continues to answer all my deepest desires and calls me to a continual intimate union with Him for the salvation of my soul and all the souls entrusted to my care.

For more information, go to [www.ssvmusa.org](http://www.ssvmusa.org) and go to YouTube "Guyana 2019 in Gratitude."

## Serving in Mission

By Carol McBrady



*Carol is a Catholic lay missionary in Lusaka, Zambia. She has degrees in Social Work and secondary education. She is from Maple Lake, MN and began serving in Zambia in 2002.*

I have a degree in Social Work and I thought I knew all about poverty. On my first trip to Africa, God showed me how wrong I was.

I encountered thousands of children living in rubbish piles, sewage tunnels and drainage ditches. After this first trip, I knew part of my heart was still in the streets of Zambia. I had no idea what it was all about but kept praying for God's guidance. Since that trip and my experiences, I have founded Action for Children Zambia providing healthcare, shelter, food, and education...a future.

With the help of my family and community and Zambian college students, we created Catholic programs that provide for hundreds of children on the streets. With God's help, we have managed to aid many of them and introduce them to a positive, productive life grounded in faith and Zambian norms.

We currently have a transition home in Lusaka where street children encounter family tracing, counseling, literacy classes and learn how to live in community. They then either return to their families of origin or move to a permanent home





in Kulanga Bana, our farm located two hours east of Lusaka. When they qualify for Grade 8, the child would move to the 3rd home in Chongwe which provides for the needs of our secondary students. Each child is expected to finish school and move into the work world or go to a trade school or college.

Every home is based on Catholic principles and teachings and is linked to a Catholic parish in the community.

I pray that one day, children under our care will become adults able to care for themselves and their families and make a positive difference in the Development of Zambia.

Through our support from donors and volunteers, we continue to grow. We recently purchased land in Chongwe to build more permanent homes for our growing number of children. I invite all to visit and encounter our kids. We host long and short-term volunteers from the Archdiocese, U.S. and Europe. Thank you Center for Mission for all your continual help

## Returning from Mission

By Liz Mach



*Liz is from Pine City and earned her Master in Public Health from the University of St. Catherine in St. Paul. Liz joined Maryknoll as a lay missionary and has served in several*

*African countries before landing in Musoma, Tanzania focusing on helping with Gender Based Violence of young girls. She was the longest serving lay missionary and was featured in our World Mission Sunday Appeal in 2014.*

My time had come to return to Minnesota. Although I had returned to visit several times, my home was in Tanzania. I was away for over 42 years.

I had been warned about the word, "re-entry," and the experience of

changing "homes and cultures" after all this time, but had no idea what it meant, until I encountered it myself.

There are lava flows of emotions of just



a normal transition, but now these are compounded with the current issues of COVID-19. I even had to quarantine for 14 days after over 40 hours of traveling.

Sometimes I chuckle to myself and ask God why I need the extra challenge of COVID-19 at this time. Re-entry is not easy but adding COVID-19 into the mix? Yikes!!

The normal transition emotions hit at odd times, especially when I realize I do not have a return ticket back to Africa, my home for so many years. A few tears will seep out and I try to control these feelings rather than submerge them. I know that they will erupt again but maybe time will begin to heal these strong emotions constantly churning inside of me.

My feelings and heart swing like a pendulum as I attempt to adjust to things here and at surprising times, swing back to the children at the Musoma diocesan shelter, Jipe Moyo, for children escaping from Gender Based Violence. Are they safe? Are they receiving what they need?

We know that COVID pandemic has caused a spike in teenage pregnancies, violence against women and "out of season" Female Genital Mutilation as schools are closed. This forces distance learning. And only a few students have computers and access to the Internet at home. As school stopped, Gender Based Violence has increased.

I feel caught between two worlds. Where is my home now? It is somewhat disconcerting and creates a touch of

anxiety for me. I do miss Musoma, Tanzania, my home for so long, and now I need to transfer "homeness" to Minnesota. I will never regret my service and time in Tanzania.

I need to repeat my mantra, "Be gentle with yourself" and my mantra to God, "Be gentle with me right now."

We all need God's gentleness right now!

## World Mission Sunday October 18, 2020

By Deacon Mickey Friesen  
and Eric Simon

Wow! This year is an experience we will never forget. The COVID pandemic has dramatically altered the way we work, eat, enjoy entertainment and family, and not least of all, the way we worship and share with others.

With this situation in mind, we have several adjustments to the upcoming World Mission Sunday collection which is a celebration of our catholicity worldwide.

First, this World Mission Sunday celebration connects us to our global brothers and sisters outside of our communities. This newsletter presents individuals from our own community who have chosen to "go." This year, because of the pandemic, we are also including the mission experience at home, in our own neighborhoods and country. There will be one collection on October 18 which will support universal mission.

Secondly, with parish and Mass attendance restricted, all materials this year will be forwarded to parish administration electronically. Your parishes will determine best ways to share them with you. They will also be available on our download page at our website: [www.centerformission.org](http://www.centerformission.org). As always, for questions, contact Eric Simon at 651.291.4446 or [simone@archspm.org](mailto:simone@archspm.org).

Thank you and our prayers are with you during this difficult year.