



# SSps MISSION

Called by the Spirit ~ Embracing the World  
Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit  
Paraclete Province — USA and Caribbean  
November 2018



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As I peer through my office window, I see the gradual turning of color in the trees, the graying in the sky. I feel the chill in the air. All indicators of the passage of time, of seasons, of life, and of expectations! It is a time of passage... a look back and an opportunity to look ahead! In particular, it is a time of gratitude.

Sr. Joan Chittister writes in her book, The Breath of the Soul, "... Gratitude is the alleluia to existence, the praise that thunders through the universe as tribute to the ongoing presence of God with us even now."

As we approach the holydays of Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas; the time of hope, joy, peace and love; the time of family gatherings; and especially a time of GRATITUDE, our Community of Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters wishes you the abundance of God's blessings for you and your loved ones.

Each of you, through your response to your baptismal call to discipleship with Christ, share in the work of 'mission'. Through your prayers for our missionary Sisters and the people among whom we serve and help and your generous financial support of our mission ministries, YOU, too, are co-missionary! Without YOUR accompaniment, much of our work would not be possible.

Throughout this year (2018), I have shared stories of our Sisters "widening the circle of communion with others" in the various mission lands where our Congregation ministers. In this issue, I wish to give you a 'bird's eye glimpse' of how your prayers and support have enabled our Sisters in their mission work in the Paraclete Province of the United States and the Caribbean.

For all you have done and continue to do...

*May God bless and hold you in the embrace of peace, joy, and love!*

*Happy Holydays and Wishes for a Peaceful New Year!*

*Sr. Mary Miller, SSps*

# See!



## What Goodness and Love Have Wrought!

Those of you who regularly attend Sunday Mass may be familiar with the annual Propagation of the Faith Mission Appeal. Usually, a missionary visits the parish during the summer months to share a tiny aspect of the Church's mission to preach the "Good News" and to share stories of life in mission. Our Congregation is missionary in its core. Making God known, loved, and glorified permeates every aspect of our missionary activities.

This year, our participation in the Mission Cooperative Program, an out-reach of the Office of the Propagation of the Faith and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, provided the opportunity to reach out to people of faith in 12 Dioceses / 30 Parishes.

The Sisters, from many countries and places of mission, who participated in this initiative have been privileged to experience and share the life of faith and the beauty of wor-

ship with our sisters and brothers in many parts of our country. Our journeys took us to beautiful, well maintained historic churches, as well as to modern structures that were built in response to the growth of local faith communities. We shared our message in four languages but spoke several more conversing with individuals, a true picture of the universality of the Church. We were graced to speak before sizeable assemblies, but also with small closely knit groups of worshippers. Regardless of the size, we found interest, generous and enthusiastic response. The greatest reward for our efforts was the discovery of many Catholic people genuinely concerned about and very supportive of mission work. Many people articulated their sense of responsibility for passing on faith within their families, but also to spread it beyond and witness to the values of Christianity. They wish and pray that the priceless pearl of faith and experience of God's love become a treasure in the lives of other people.

We heard their concern and anguish because of closures or mergers of parishes; the sadness of parents whose children drifted away from the Church; the fear that faith and Christian values may hardly influence the lives of younger people. We hold in prayer the intentions entrusted to us but especially we remember the sick and families that are in crisis.



Sr. Maria Goretti Nguyen visited St. Adalbert Parish, St. Paul, MN

Even though the possibility to share from the pulpit with the whole assembly was appreciated, it was the individual encounters that made each visit memorable. Inevitably, in each parish after the Mass, someone would come to say that they know one of the Sisters or they are familiar with the places of our missions. We had opportunities to meet relatives of our Sisters, sometimes classmates or alumnae of one of our schools or programs. Some people were acquainted with our Sisters in their country of origin and some were natives of our hometowns. These encounters confirmed the basic truth that we are interconnected and wired for unity and communion. In the end, we are one big family of God's children, and we need to care for each other and love each other.

After one of the Masses a couple, grandparents, shared their joy of involvement in missionary work. They were in the company of their grandson who was adopted from one of the Caribbean islands. This family extended their love toward one of the children in need of a family and assured better opportunities for the child, They expressed their gratitude and support to missionaries who provide opportunities for children and adults in other lands. Education is a powerful tool in this process. In the same way "Jesus went about doing good." (Acts 10: 38)

Assessing the needs, we ask ourselves what would Jesus do or what would he like us to do for the people? Collaboration and generosity of many friends and benefactors, the ordinary Catholics and Christians in the pews, enable us (missionaries in the field) to 'widen the circle' of God's love for people and make concrete the transforming influence of GOODNESS and LOVE that effects change in the lives of others.



The snippets of life and mission featured in this issue of SSpS MISSION, focus on the various projects of our SSpS Paraclete Province (United States and the Caribbean) for which the proceeds of your mission donations through our magazine and those from the summer mission appeals are being used.



We sincerely THANK all of YOU who have shared of YOUR Goodness and Love through your donations and contributions. We greatly appreciate your sharing with us resources that support our mission endeavors and for supporting our missionaries with your PRAYERS, interest, and good wishes. May God bless you and your loved ones with peace, joy, happiness, and love!

Pictures on this page depict scenes from Holy Spirit Life Learning Center: Summer Peace Camp and Women's Retreat—"Healing Your Heart, Loving Yourself".

## Holy Spirit Life learning Center: Our Mission in Chicago (Rogers Park) and Wheeling, IL

Through the ministries of our Holy Spirit Life Learning Center, special programs are available to assist adults and children in local areas of Chicago (Rogers Park) and Wheeling to improve literacy skills, to develop employment and social skills, to receive counseling services and other services that enhance the quality of life for the participants. Among the current programs, classes are offered in English as a Second language (ESL), Computer Skills, Sewing and Knitting, Bible Study, and Guitar. Children are encouraged to participate in the Homework Help after school program, arts and crafts, and the Summer Peace Camp. Counseling and referral services are available through Case Management services located at the Center sites. Through out-reach education programs in churches / parishes and other associations, the Staff raises awareness about issues of Domestic Abuse.

WEEK/ THEME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WEEK 1 DIVERSITY	Human dignity	Identity	Embracing differences	Inclusion	Acceptance
WEEK 2 LOVE	Loving God	Loving ourselves	Loving others	Respect	Harmony
WEEK 3 FORGIVENESS	Compassion	Humility	Healing	Reconciliation	Joy
WEEK 4 COMMUNION	Faith and Prayer	Friendship	Generosity / Service to others	Sharing gifts and talents	Team work



The Summer Peace Camp for children is offered at both HSLLC sites. The purpose of the camp is to teach children and youth skills for peaceful conflict resolution, teamwork, and non-violence. The programs help the participants develop healthy relationships with their peers, family members, and other members of the community. The Camp provides, through day to day activities, peaceful alternatives to handle conflict between and among one another. In the faith-centered atmosphere of the Center sites, we aim to strengthen communication skills, foster peace, and build communities of hope.

The motto for this year's Summer Peace Camp was: "One Heart, Many Faces - Communion with Others". The weekly themes centered on Love, Diversity, Forgiveness, and Communion. Each day began with prayer and a lesson from Scripture. The children then enjoyed age appropriate activities and 'field trips' that reinforced the theme.

The camp concluded with a closing program during which the 'campers' delighted the guests with a performance of songs, dances, and skits. We ended the camp experience with a pot-luck supper for all.



Children, adults, and camp counselors at the Wheeling site engaged in similar experiences. Sr. Leonette, SSpS, guides instruction for ESL. (right) The children in the Summer Peace Camp enjoyed visits from or to local public service personnel and local businesses.



**The picture on the front cover depicts children in art class.**

## Our Mission in the Caribbean Antigua - St. Kitts - Jamaica

Between the years 2002 - 2012, our SSpS United States Paraclete Province established our mission presence in the island countries of Antigua (2002), St. Kitts (2005), and Jamaica (2012). Throughout these past 16 years, the Sisters served in ministry through education, catechetical, and social-pastoral services, especially among the poor and marginalized. A pre-school with three classrooms was constructed in St. Kitts; the termite-ridden convent in Antigua is being replaced; food is distributed to the hungry; prisoners are visited, and the listening ear and loving heart of the Sisters are avenues of hope and joy to the people. Your prayers and financial contributions support the continued work of these missions.



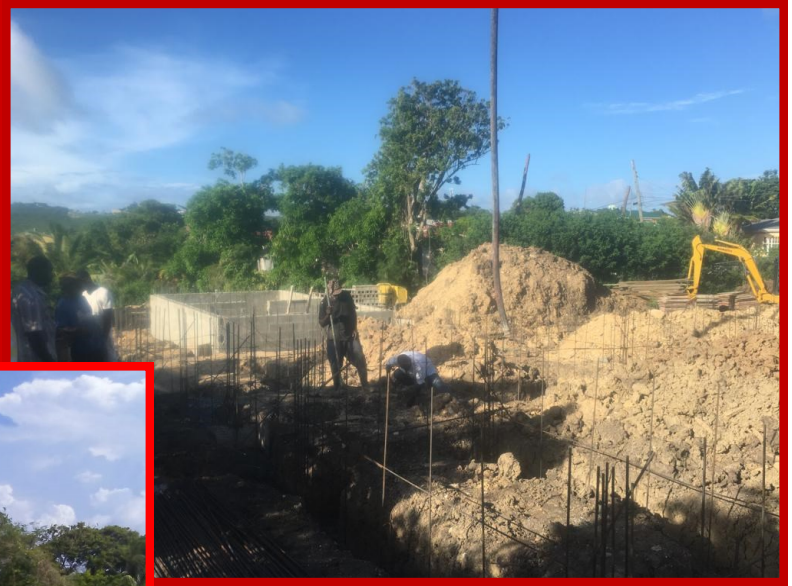
Collaboration in mission takes on many forms. In anticipation of building additional classrooms for Our Lady of the Assumption School, Morant Bay, Jamaica, a shipping container was filled to the brim with construction materials, school equipment, learning materials, and other goods and materials for the needs of the mission and further distribution to the poor.



Friends from our neighboring parishes in Northbrook, Glenview, and Northfield, IL (St. Norbert, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and St. Philip) helped to gather the goods; Dibble Moving and Storage Co. donated employees to pack the container; Food For the Poor Organization provided for the transport, shipping, and delivery of the container to the mission. The ever-widening circle of 'communion with others' made this project possible.



The container with materials for the mission arrived safely in mid-August and construction of the three additional classroom spaces began. In the meantime, the teachers and students attend classes using spaces in the church, the rectory, and small storage areas. Each day they observe the progress of the construction and look forward to its completion.



We are grateful to all our Sisters who minister in the Caribbean missions.

The challenges are many, but their love of God, their love for the people, and YOUR interest, prayers and support sustain them in their ministries.

To see videos of the mission in Jamaica go to: YouTube SSpS in Jamaica, Mission School in Jamaica, Jamaica OLA School



### Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

Our Lady of the Assumption School  
Morant Bay, St. Thomas, Jamaica

September 16, 2018,

Dear Sisters and Friends,

We, Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters in Jamaica, would like to express our sincere thanks to all of you who extended so much effort to prepare and send the shipping container to Jamaica. Thank you for the support for this mission in St. Thomas, Jamaica, which is so dear to all of us.

The container arrived on Monday, September 10th. With the help of some people, we were successful with the unloading of the container. All the items were separated into three areas: the building materials for construction of the classrooms and other school supplies, the general items for distribution to the people, and some items for our community.

We are so grateful for your support and we want to assure you that you are in our prayers.

In the love of the Holy Spirit,

*Sr. Yuliana, Sr. Fifi, Sr. Barbara*



Sr. Barbara works with other children of Morant Bay and Bamboo River who do not attend Our Lady of the Assumption Sch.

## Summer Bible School Greenville and Indianola, MS and Pine Bluff, AR



Sr. Viera Klabnikova, Sr. Mary Miller,  
Sr. Clara Machimura, and Yolette Dorce  
with the children in Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Annually, three teams of Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters travel to Mississippi and Arkansas to guide the children of Sacred Heart Parish, Immaculate Conception - St. Benedict the Moor Parish, and St. Peter - St. Raphael - St. Justin Parish in their Summer Bible School. The 2018 program was “In Communion”: In Communion with God (prayer), In Communion with Creation, In Communion with Family and Friends, In Communion with Others (the poor, elderly, sick, lonely, bullied, and rejected), In Communion with One Another (sharing).



Through prayer, Bible stories (discussion and sharing), music, arts and crafts, videos, and other activities, the children grew in their awareness of God’s loving presence in their lives and their Christian responsibilities to be Disciples of Christ in today’s world.

Parish volunteers, which included teens and senior citizens, assisted the Sisters, provided a simple lunch for the children, and enhanced the Bible School setting with their example and presence.

The Summer Bible School is an expression of the vibrant Faith Community of the Parishes.



YOU, our mission supporters,  
help to make these programs available  
to children in areas of our country  
where Catholic Parish Schools  
no longer exist.

Through your prayers,  
the mission of Christ to  
“Go and Teach”  
is carried on!







# WHAT IS MY WORD TO THE WORLD?

Every year we celebrate Mission Sunday in October and we often hear that every Christian is called to be a missionary.

In his book, Rejoice and Be Glad, Pope Francis moves us one step further. He says that we need to see the entirety of our life as a mission. “Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs God gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make, so as to discern its place in the mission which you have received. May you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life. Let yourself be transformed. Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so this can happen lest you fail in your precious mission.”

What a challenge! To think that God has something very special for me to do. It is very humbling to know, and I may never know, what it is in this life. I can only do my best to listen to the Holy Spirit. Even if I go stumbling along, but try to always do the most loving thing, I think God can help me in my mission.

This reminds me of one of my favorite prayers of Sir Francis Drake:

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too pleased with ourselves,  
when our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little,  
when we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly, t o  
venture on wilder seas where storms will show your mastery, where losing  
sight of land, we shall find the stars.

We ask you to push forward the horizons of our hopes,  
and to push us into the future with strength, courage, hope and love.

I don't pretend to know what particular mission I was born to carry out but hopefully I can push into the future with strength, courage, hope and love. Will you join me on my journey?

*Sr. Pat Snider, SSps*

Directress of the Holy Spirit Missionary Association

## The Call to MISSIONARY... Vocation Ministry

St. Therese of Lisieux (the Little Flower) patroness of the missions, reflected on her vocation. "...I understood the LOVE comprised all vocations, that LOVE was everything, that it embraced all times and places... in a word, that it was eternal: Then, in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: 'O Jesus, my Love... my vocation, at last I have found it... MY VOCATION IS LOVE!'" (St. Therese of Lisieux, Story of a Soul, p.194)

The vocation of each of us is to LOVE! Some live that vocation through marriage and family life, others through dedicated service to others in the single lay life, still others dedicate their lives in a special way to Christ and the ministries of the Church as consecrated men and women (priests, brothers, sisters). However, the common thread among us is LOVE.

The aim of vocation ministry is "to awaken and encourage sensitivity to the call of God in the lives of young people through prayer and help in discerning God's call." (SSpS Formation Manual) The principle in this ministry is the invitation of Jesus, 'come and see' (Jn1:39). It is a time of accompaniment and growth in the Christian way of life and in discerning one's personal call. The young woman has opportunities to become more acquainted with community life and to meet and interact with others from different cultures and life experiences. In our Congregation, international / intercultural life and ministry with a focus on justice and peace are at the heart of our missionary way of being.

The discernment process is only the first step for women choosing to consecrate their lives for Gospel ministry.

Preparation for full commitment to Christ and the Church as a religious Missionary Sister begins with the pre-novitiate experience. The young woman comes to live in community for one year, during which she gets better acquainted with religious community life, learns more about our Congregation, Scripture and prayer. She has opportunity for Spiritual Direction, engages in some local mission out-reach programs, and grows in a better understanding of her religious missionary vocation. Yolette Dorce, who participated in the Summer bible School Program, is one of our pre-novices.

The pre-novitiate experience is followed by a two-year novitiate. The time of novitiate enables the women to grow in deeper relationship with God, one another, and our Congregation. It is a time of deepening the discernment process and preparation for the profession of religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. We have two women, Sr. Marie Eunide Voltaire and Sr. Theresa Kim in our novitiate program.



Several young women joined our SSpS Sisters in the Rogers Park Community for a discernment vocation retreat.

Sr. Aprilia Untarto (standing left Sr. Yustina Intan (sitting right)  
Vocation Directresses, guided the retreat .

Sr. Angelica Oyarzo Chavol  
guided the women with their retreat project.

During the retreat experience, the women participated in the daily prayers and activities of the Sisters.

You may think that preparation for religious life and mission culminates with the profession of religious vows. Not so! In the years following temporary vows (for a time of 6 years), the Sister continues to prepare for mission service through continued professional training, such as for teaching, nursing, catechetics, pastoral care, counseling, and so forth. During these years, many Sisters throughout our Congregation have the opportunity for a cross-cultural mission experience in another culture / country where our Sisters are engaged in ministry. There, the Sister experiences the realities of mission service, often in very challenging and difficult circumstances, away from family and friends, and all that is familiar to them. It is a time to discover the richness and beauty of life outside our comfort zones, to reach out to the 'other' and embrace all peoples with an open and loving heart. Currently, Sr. Evelyn Lobo, from our Paraclete Province, is in mission for three years in Cuba. We, in turn, have Sisters from Brazil, Australia, Indonesia, and Argentina in our country for their experience of mission.



Sr. Maria Goretti Nguyen (Vietnam) missioned to South Korea,  
 Sr. Sara Guardado (Mexico) missioned to Paraguay,  
 Sr. Viera Kalbnikova (Slovakia) missioned to Zambia,  
 Sr. Skolastika Wea (Indonesia) missioned to USA

After special time of preparation and renewal the Sister professes her vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience FOREVER! On that occasion she receives a mission mandate., a life-long appointment to mission. On September 8th of this year, four Sisters professed final vows in our Chapel here at Convent of the Holy Spirit.

They, along with two other Sister-companions who returned to their home country for profession of vows (Sr. Clara Machimura and Sr. Limpia Torres), are from different countries of birth and will work in other countries of mission. We are grateful for their generous gift of self to the service of love to others. We pray God's blessing will accompany them and bless their efforts in the vineyard of the Lord!

Your prayers for these young women and your prayers for vocations to all ministries of the Church are YOUR ways of engaging in missionary life.

**SSpS MISSION Magazine: (Quarterly: February, May, July, November) ANNUAL Subscription \$10. / yr.**  
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**SSpS MISSION Magazine is published quarterly by:**

**Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit ~ 319 Waukegan Road, Northfield, IL 60093**

**www.sspS-usa.org ~ (847) 441-0126**

Editor: Sr. Mary Miller, SSpS