

MAY 2025



SSpS MISSION

Called by the Spirit • Embracing the World
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters | USA & Caribbean

The background of the entire page is a painting of a woman in a dark blue religious habit. She is looking upwards with a serene expression. In her hands, she holds a white dove, which is perched on a glowing golden orb. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light.

HOPE

COME, HOLY SPIRIT...

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holy spirit sisters usa



Sr. Dorota Maria Piechaczek who has served in the Paraclete (United States) Province of the SSpS for the past 12 years has been transferred to our SSpS international headquarters in Rome. During her mission service here in the USA, she has contributed reflections and articles for our magazine. In this issue of SSpS MISSION, she continues her reflection on “HOPE”.

How has the Jubilee Year been for you? Should I rather ask, “What is the state of your hope at this stage of your life?”

When you receive this SSpS Mission Magazine, we will be only days from celebrating Pentecost. While for us, Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit, it is a titular feast, the Holy Spirit is given to all of us as the Spirit of the Risen Lord, our God who is alive and active in our lives up to the present and until the end of times. The Risen Jesus breathed the Spirit on the disciples to make them preachers and witnesses of His victory over death and sin. It is because of this power that you and I are Christians. Today, we call on the Holy Spirit to rejuvenate us, make us alive and passionate, so that we will witness Life and pass on Faith to others. Pope Francis speaks of “hope constantly renewed and confirmed by the working of the Holy Spirit”. The Holy Spirit then gives strength to the Church to carry God’s mission, offering people life in abundance (Jn 10:10) while journeying toward the Kingdom of God.

Fr. Timothy Radcliff, OP reflecting, before the Synod in 2024, on the Risen Lord’s appearance to the disciples in the locked room, invited the participants to ‘open the stuffy rooms’ of our fears, doubts, tiredness, disappointment, separation, confusion of the usual ways of praying and doing charity, allowing the wind of the Holy Spirit to lead us to our brothers and sisters with new enthusiasm. Let us be possessed by the truth that “He is risen!” and that He gave us His Spirit.

Dear Readers, given that you are our Friends, Relatives, Associates, and Supporters, allow us the liberty to share a few ideas inviting you to embark on the mission as “Pilgrims of Hope” with us. Let us consider a few possibilities taking a glance at the Papal Bull proclaiming the Jubilee Year, by Pope Francis:

A. Care for life is a focus of the Holy Father's attention. He appeals to us to protect, appreciate and support all forms of life, thus generating hope for the future. As mothers or fathers, grandparents, siblings or friends, we are asked to find time for our family members letting them know that they are important to us, offer babysitting or spend time with the elderly members, invite people to an outing in nature or to a museum that would help to lift hearts to God in praise. Family apostolate has been part of our mission from the foundation. Recent forms of this ministry are represented by Sisters making efforts to uphold Christian family values through meetings such as PT (parent & teacher), catechesis and training, recollection days. In their pastoral work, Sisters regularly visit the sick or elderly people, shuts-in or seniors.

B. Young people are the future and they are the messengers of hope for humanity. As you know, the SSsP Mission Magazine often carries stories from our Pre-school in St. Kitts, our Prep School in Jamaica, and the Summer Peace Camp in Chicago. Providing access to education to children has defined the ministry of the Holy Spirit Sisters around the world for over 130 years now. Your partnership with us in these efforts is greatly appreciated and makes hope of a solid education shine bright for children and parents. With good education, prospects for the future of the children and entire families are promising.

C. The Holy Father appeals to our civil right to influence the policies of national governments, so that they respect human dignity, protect the poor and vulnerable, assist migrants, direct spending to improve the quality of life, reduce military expenditure, ban violence and dark sites in the digital world (to name a few of the issues). Through legislative actions, we may contribute to bringing hope to those whose future is compromised. The Justice and Peace Office of our U.S. Province has been in the forefront lobbying for the above causes, in collaboration with other organizations, as well as assisting Sisters and others with exercising their rights.

D. The Holy Year is about forgiveness, God's mercy, prayer and pilgrimage. Your prayers for the SSsP missions have empowered Sisters to work tirelessly in the ministries mentioned as well as in various others. Please continue your prayers, read and meditate on the Word of God, so that by God's grace many people will "encounter Jesus, the door of salvation and the reason for hope". In case you are not able to make a pilgrimage, we propose, you read articles about the Sisters' ministries, contemplate the photos, and so make an imaginative journey and then offer your prayers that these people may know God and so live with hope.

E. The Holy Father usually surprises us with his down to earth approach. So here is his wish: "that each of us may

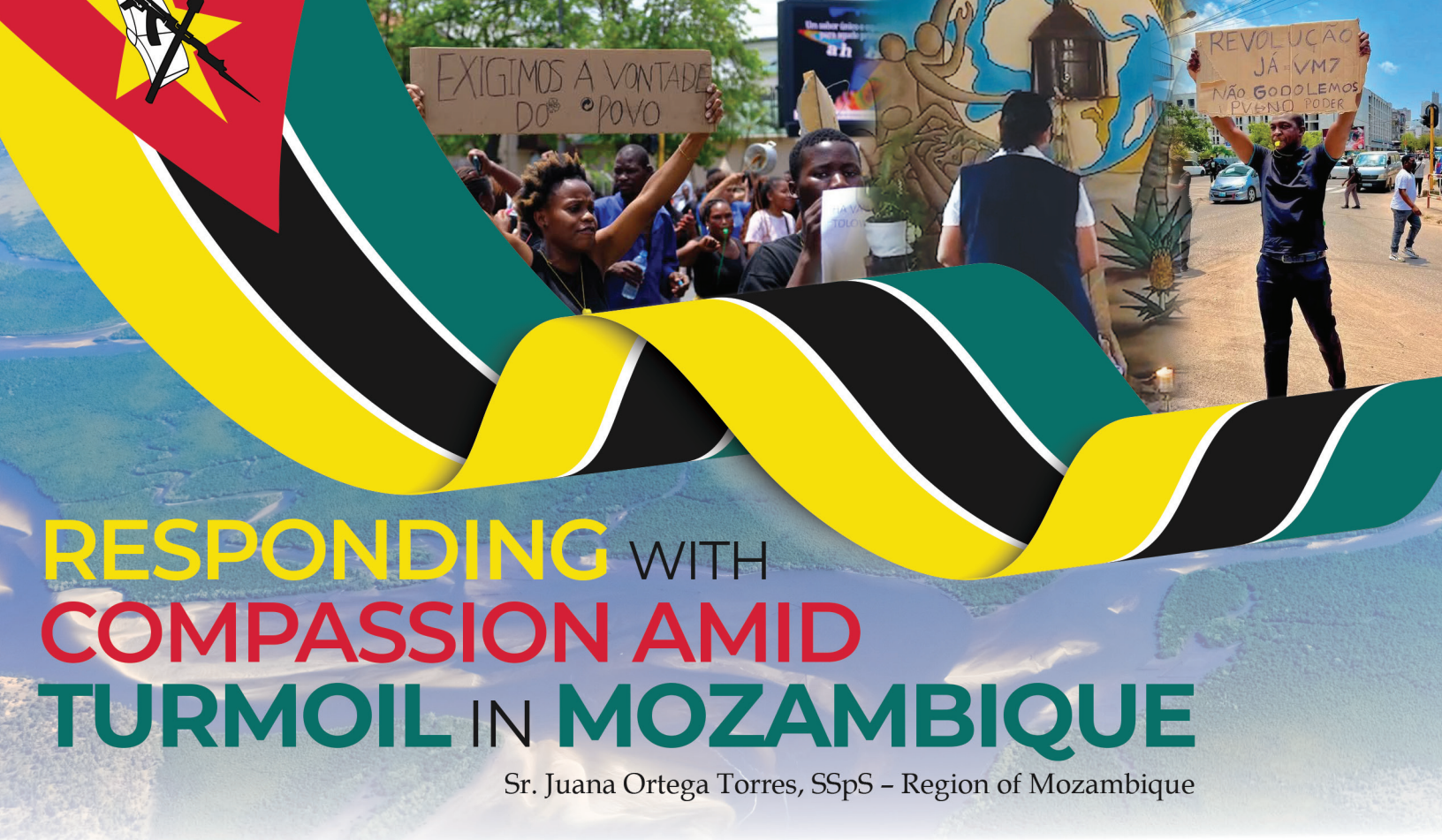
be able to offer a smile, a small gesture of friendship, a kind look, a ready ear, a good deed, in the knowledge that, in the Spirit of Jesus, these can become, for those who receive them, rich seeds of hope." (Spes non confundit)

Dear Friends, after the first article, we heard from a few of you, indeed "hope does not disappoint". We congratulate you on availing yourself of the graces of the Holy Year from early on. A friend of mine, an older widow, told me that she decided to 'open the door of her apartment'. She resolved to mark the Holy Year by inviting some older people like herself to join her for lunch and conversation. She had a couple, she meets at church sometimes, over already.

May this article be a further stimulus to let the Holy Spirit take us out of our locked and stuffy room because "the Holy Spirit illumines all believers with the light of hope. He keeps that light burning, like an ever-burning lamp, to sustain and invigorate our lives. Christian hope does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God's love ... (Spes non confundit)

Vaclav Havel, writer, dissident, and political prisoner reflected on hope from his 'stuffy room' in his book *Disturbing the Peace*: "It (hope) is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart; it transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizons. Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well but, rather, an ability to work for something because it is good, not just because it stands a chance to succeed." Let us pray for each other that we might have this wideness of forgiving, hospitable, and hopeful heart.





RESPONDING WITH COMPASSION AMID TURMOIL IN MOZAMBIQUE

Sr. Juana Ortega Torres, SSsP – Region of Mozambique

Since the October 9, 2024 elections in Mozambique, communities have been gripped by anger and fear. Tensions escalated during the vote-counting process, leading young people to take to the streets, demanding social change and expressing their desire for Venâncio Mondlane to lead. Their cries of “we’re tired of hunger and injustice” reflect the widespread frustration with poverty and inequality.

Mozambique’s poverty crisis, with 26 million living below the poverty line, has worsened due to rising violence. Peaceful demonstrations organized by Mondlane have been marred by infiltrators inciting chaos, looting, and destruction. The police’s use of real bullets has heightened fear, with reports of leaders, including Mondlane, facing threats and assassination. Basic necessities, including water, food, and medical care, are becoming harder to access, and soaring food prices exacerbate the crisis. Vulnerable groups, especially women and children, face increasing risks, including exploitation and violence.

Amid this turmoil, the Sisters focus on pastoral work, offering hope and practical support to women, children, and the sick. They provide food, educational aid, and human and spiritual formation in parish groups and women’s homes. Through natural remedies and care, they treat illnesses and injuries while offering comfort and solidarity in an uncertain time. The Sisters pray with the people, holding on to the hope that good will prevail over evil.



Sr. Juana stands in solidarity, lifting her heart in prayer for peace alongside the people.





RISING FROM ASHES IN FLORES EAST

Sr. Yasinta Ota, SSpS – Province of Flores East, Indonesia



Amid destruction and loss, the Sisters' unwavering commitment to the mission and community shines in Flores East, Indonesia.

On Sunday, November 3, 2024, at midnight, the Lewotobi Laki-laki Volcano in Eastern Flores erupted, leaving devastation in its wake. The Sanctissima Trinitas community in Hokeng Jaya Village, Wulanggintang sub-district, suffered extensive damage. Known as "the home we return to," the Hokeng Sisters' community, which also housed both aspirant and tertianship members, was deeply affected.

For safety reasons, the mission in Hokeng was closed. The area remains uninhabitable, with schools, boarding facilities, and the health clinic still shut down. Some teachers were reassigned to other schools, while workers were relocated to other communities in Flores East Province, including Maumere, Lela, and the Kewapante elderly house.

Amid grief for the loss of a sister, the community rose to support survivors. The convent became a hub for receiving and distributing aid, working tirelessly with JPIC SVD and SSpS to extend relief. Challenges, including limited resources and difficult access, tested their resolve.

Recovery efforts focus on restarting schools and providing medical aid for the sick and elderly. Long-term plans aim to rebuild homes for residents and the families of sisters affected by the eruption. Through faith and action, the Hokeng Sisters continue to inspire resilience and solidarity.



The Sisters preparing medicines for the victims of the eruption.



THE BLOSSOMING OF TOGO-BENIN MISSION



Sr. Maria Teresa Condenio, SSpS
Province of Togo-Benin

The growth of each sister is a manifestation of commitment to become compassionate and be an instrument of transformation in the place where they share life and mission.

What key moments led to becoming a province? The mission's transformation into a province was marked by a steady increase in local vocations, which signaled the mission's growth and sustainability. Today, the province comprises 38 sisters representing 9 different nationalities, a testament to the congregation's vibrant and diverse presence.

How have communities, ministries, and members grown? Over the years, the mission has expanded significantly. It now includes five communities in Togo and one in Benin. The sisters are engaged in a variety of ministries, including formation at all stages (aspirancy, postulancy, and novitiate, with the novitiate located in Ghana), healthcare through hospitals and dispensaries, and education, which spans from kindergarten to senior high school.

What challenges and opportunities did the sisters face early on? In the early years since May 1989 when the mission opened, the sisters faced significant challenges as they adapted to life in Togo and Benin. Language was a major hurdle, as they needed to navigate English, French, and various local dialects. Living in international, intercultural, and intergenerational communities required patience and understanding, as did integrating into the country's socio-economic realities, grappling with widespread poverty, and respecting strong traditional beliefs. However, these challenges brought opportunities for growth. The sisters embraced the chance to study French, English, and local languages, attend formators' courses, participate in professional updating programs, and deepen their understanding of the local culture through ongoing formation sessions.

The journey of the sisters for the past 36 years is a journey of a Paschal Mystery. The dying and the rising experience moved them to continue the journey with hope. The growth of each sister is a manifestation of commitment to become compassionate and be an instrument of transformation in the place where they share life and mission. Gratitude to the Triune God who accompanied and inspired them to become what they are now, to all the people with whom they are working.



REBUILDING LIVES

Marking A Year of Recovery

Sr. Luciana Yoshida, SSpS – Province of Japan

"In the face of a devastating earthquake and torrential rains, the Caritas Center volunteers continue to bring support to the resilient communities of Noto Peninsula, Japan."

As the community marked the anniversary of the devastating January 1, 2024 earthquake in Japan's Noto Peninsula, memories of loss and resilience came to the forefront. The earthquake caused widespread destruction in Wajima City and nearby towns, leaving many without water and sewer systems for months. Just as recovery efforts gained momentum, tragedy struck again.

On September 21, 2024, unprecedented rainfall—nearly 500 mm. in two days—triggered landslides and floods. Many homes that had escaped the earthquake were destroyed, forcing families to evacuate once more. Amid these challenges, Sr. Luciana Yoshida collaborated with Caritas Noto Support Center to bring relief and hope to affected communities.

The Caritas Center staff were actively involved in water delivery services. Since by November most of the areas' lifeline recovered. The center is now mainly serving at temporary cafes in several places to offer emotional and spiritual support and giving a place for victims to gather, bringing food parcels to elderly residents in remote areas, and coordinating volunteers for house clean-ups.

Through the presence and actions of the volunteers of the Caritas Center, they embody hope, resilience, and the enduring mission to serve those in need. Their work continues to inspire solidarity and responsibility in safeguarding both humanity and the earth.



From Seeds to Harvest: The Journey of Angola

Sr. Marta Sojka, SSpS – Province of Angola

What moments led to the establishment of the province? The transformation into a province was marked by key milestones: the sisters' growing recognition and stability across Angola, an increase in the number of sisters from other countries, a rise in vocations, the establishment of new communities, and the organization of lay associates.

What are the province main ministries? The sisters are devoted to catechesis, pastoral care for abandoned children, the promotion of women, and healthcare ministry. They serve lepers, provide alternative medicine, and support individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

What are the mission journey highlights? Over 44 years of mission, the sisters have fostered God's

love and joy among the people, earning recognition for their dedication. Achievements include a growing number of vocations, young sisters in temporary vows, new constructions like schools and health centers, and the arrival of new sisters to expand and strengthen their mission.

How have the people supported this growth? The community has played a significant role, embracing the sisters' mission and collaborating in pastoral care. Lay people, while initially unfamiliar with the sisters' way of life, have become active partners, inspired by their work and seeking to join their mission.

What are the future plans? Plans include opening new communities, constructing a school, and establishing a new health center to serve more people.



The province receives participants for the cross cultural exposure program. The sisters say goodbye to a lady from Austria who came to Angola for the mission experience.



Group photo with the treasurers of Angola and Sr. Regina George, General Treasurer.

Climate in Crisis

Sr. Rose Therese Nolta, SSpS

Climate change is no longer a distant threat - it's a reality we face today.

Last year, the devastating wild fires in California have been associated with dry and hot conditions for months along with high seasonal winds. This environmental devastation caused the destruction of housing and community structures. Peoples' lives have been deeply affected and the cost to them, the state and the people is phenomenal. At least 27 people died and the firefighters will be impacted by the fire for years to come in terms of health.

Climate Change is here. But it's not just about weather patterns. Climate change threatens food security, access to clean water, and public health. Rising temperatures contribute to the spread of diseases and respiratory problems.

All areas of the United States and our world are being affected by climate change. It's not just an environmental issue - it's a human issue. It impacts jobs, homes, and the stability of economies worldwide. If left unchecked, these effects will only intensify, hitting the most vulnerable communities hardest.

You may ask "What can I/we do?" By working together, we can slow the progression of climate change and mitigate its effects. It starts with small everyday changes and builds into large-scale collective action.

What you can do: Educate yourself and others. Make sustainable choices. Support policy changes. Be aware and learn more about your environment, respect it. Here in our Convent of the Holy Spirit, we are using cloth bags instead of plastic ones for shopping. We try not to use bottled water unless there is a health reason. We are collecting pill bottles to be reused by another organization. We are recycling toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes, etc. Plant trees and flowers. Advocate! Pray that we are creative in saving our environment for one another. It's time to act - not out of fear, but out of hope and determination to create a brighter future.

Gratitude FOR MY YEARS AS HSMA DIRECTOR!



Saying “good-byes” has always been the most difficult act in my missionary life. I moved around many times as a child and missionary life just continued on the same pattern. In the March issue of the missalette GIVE US THIS DAY, there was an article by Maria von Trapp which I heartily agree with. She wrote “It will be very interesting one day to follow the pattern of our life as it is spread out like a beautiful tapestry.... In looking back, we can discover how a red thread goes through the pattern of our life: the Will of God.”

The last few months have been difficult for me because my health became a serious problem but God was there. For our Lenten Day of Prayer, God really showed me how our new Mission Partners program will be a tremendous help for our missionary outreach. Patricia Broderick gave the main presentation on “Transformation begins when we experience God’s love in the depths of our hearts.” This was well received. Some of our Partners helped with registration and some became part of the “welcoming community”.

We now have three groups of people interested in becoming our SSps Mission Partners. Seven of them have made their commitment. One group is from Waukegan and being formed by Sr. Carol Welp. Another group is from Our Lady of Africa Parish in Chicago. Pat Broderick is working with them. The third group is here at Convent of the Holy Spirit.

Now for the best news! Sr. Evelyn Lobo, SSps has said “yes” to being my replacement. She comes with a background which includes being bi-lingual and very into technology. I feel that she can do much to continue growth in our Mission Partner Program and also support our faithful Prayer Partners. She has served in mission in Cuba, and spent time in the Philippines and Australia. She also has a background from her country of origin, India. May God bless her with the joys that I have experienced being with you!

Please pray for me that I can gracefully accept whatever God has for me. Always, God has had a red thread for my every endeavor! God, please complete the task! Lots of love to all of you. You are in my prayers and I hope that I am in yours.

Sr. Pat Snider, SSps

Former Holy Spirit Missionary Association, Directress



Celebrating 100 Years

Sr. Maria Elisabeth Klodt, SSpS

Celebrated her 100th birthday on March 16, 2025. She was surrounded by her fellow SSpS Sisters, in particular Sr. Ilse Beckmann, SSpS (pictured upper left) from Steyl, Holland, the niece of Sr. Maria Elisabeth, visited to celebrate her birthday!

Join Us in Mission

Meet some of our Sisters and learn about our mission service with "Christ Over Coffee" Through your prayers and generous support, YOU are in mission with us!

 **YouTube** @holy spirit sisters usa



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