

# the MissionLink

Newsletter of the Center for Mission

Fall 2003 Issue V

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## SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR DONORS

MAY GOD'S CHOICEST  
BLESSINGS BE UPON YOU!  
YOU ARE REMEMBERED IN  
PRAYER EVERY DAY.

## WORLD MISSION SUNDAY - OCTOBER 19, 2003.

A message from his holiness, Pope John Paul II: "Holiness and Mission are inseparable aspects of the vocation of every baptized person. The commitment to become more holy is closely linked to that of spreading the message of salvation." To read more visit the Pontifical Mission Societies' website; [www.worldmissions-catholicchurch.org](http://www.worldmissions-catholicchurch.org)



## The World Mission Rosary

The World Mission Rosary offers a wonderful way for children and adults to deepen their connection with the Church global mission. Each decade of this rosary represents a different continent. White is for Europe. Yellow is for Asia. Green is for Africa. Red is for the Americas. Blue is for Oceania. As one prays each of the mysteries of the rosary, the mission rosary invites us to remember a particular part of the world. World Mission Rosaries (with guides) are available at the Center for Mission. Please contact us if you, your family, your school or your parish would like to order them.

## "CHILDREN ARE MISSIONARIES, TOO!"

This year marks the 160th anniversary of the Holy Childhood Association. This is the pontifical mission society dedicated exclusively to the missionary call of children. In 1848, French Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson founded the Holy Childhood Association partly in response to his experience of abandoned Chinese children. He became convinced that children rich in faith and love from the around the world are capable of playing their own role in the church's mission by hearing and responding to the needs of other children in mission lands. He also believed that this, in turn, could be a witness for adults to do the same. Bishop Forbin-Janson's vision of "children helping children" and children witnessing Christ to adults continues to be true to this day.



"Bridge Building"  
by Deacon Mickey Friesen,  
Director, Center for  
Mission

Young children have the wonderful capacity to relate with children from other parts of the world in a way that doesn't emphasize differences, but our common bonds. For example, I remember before the war in Iraq watching a television news story of an Iraqi mother worrying about her children's safety if the American's attacked. My 5-year-old daughter said to me at that moment, "Daddy, if the children die in Iraq, President Bush will need to go to the parents and say, "I'm sorry." As far as she was concerned, the children in Iraq are as close as our next door neighbors. She was a missionary to me that day.

Children are missionaries, but not in the traditional sense we may think of. Children uncover the vulnerabilities that all human beings share. Children have an amazing way of speaking truth in a way that is free of spin and ego and ambition. Children proclaim Christ just by being children. They disarm us and call us to be our true selves.

Jesus understood the witness of children very well. As an infant, Jesus revealed God's closeness to us by fully embracing our humanity. As a teacher, he told the disciples, "Whoever welcomes a child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me, but the one who sent me" (Mk. 9:37). As a missionary, Jesus says to the world, "I assure you that whoever does not accept the Reign of God like a little child shall not take part in it" (Mk 10:15).

Continued on page 2

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for Mission exists to bridge the Archdiocese to the Global Mission of Jesus Christ through ministries of the Pontifical Mission Societies, Mission Education, Leadership Formation and Global Solidarity.

# BOOK CORNER:

**A quick and superb read!** *Sharing Gifts in the Global Family of Faith* by Pakisa K. Tshimika and Tim Lind. In this book, the authors, an African and an American, reflect together about what it means to learn to be an actual Christian “family” community in the middle of a world in which globalization is bringing us closer together every day. They tell us how unity is promoted amidst diversity, and how all people around the world from various cultures have gifts to share with one another – as one Christian Family – and how this sharing will enrich our lives. To order click on: [www.goodbks.com](http://www.goodbks.com)

**Editors note:** We thank Fr. Bill Vos, Director of the St. Cloud Mission Office, for recommending this book. Our staff not only read the book, but ordered a supply to have on hand for parishes entering partnering relationships with communities around the world. Thanks Fr. Bill!



# VENEZUELAN MISSION



Cultural Awareness tour group from Jesucristo Resucitado Parroquia - our Archdiocesan Mission in Venezuela - found some time in their busy September schedule to relax in northern Minnesota.

## QUOTABLES!!

“The St. Jude of the Lake parish had our Venezuelan guests out last evening and it was nice. Those young people clearly are full of the Spirit and obviously (to me) have overcome horrible obstacles to stay the path of the Lord. I fear they are the few and I would like to help however possible (including traveling to their community...)”

*John Warner,  
parishioner,  
St. Jude of the Lake*

**HEARTFELT THANKS to all who sponsored children in Ciudad Guayana from our Archdiocesan Mission in Jesucristo Resucitado Parroquia. Special thanks to Sarah Luxem, summer intern in the Family Life Office, who interviewed us and wrote a beautiful article on our Mission and sponsorship. Go on [www.catholicmissionmn.org](http://www.catholicmissionmn.org) and click on Mission Education to read. For sponsorship call: 651.291.4446**



## MISSION EDUCATION



Pictured: Savanna and Roman Vasquez, Ella & Gabriel Vasquez and Jessica and Antonio Lang.

**BLESSINGS TO:**  
**Archdiocesan Employee, Mary Lynn Vasquez and her grandkids, pictured at left, for sharing their gifts during Lent at their weekly Bible Class together, using Holy Childhood coin boxes.**



St. Jude of the Lake Vacation Bible School children learned all about the life and culture of our brothers and sisters living in Venezuela.



Amy Pesta and family gathered at Holy Redeemer Parish in Montgomery, MN as Amy was awarded the Columbian Fathers Poem/Prayer contest winner last May.

### **Cont. from page one - Mickey's column ...**

The Holy Childhood Association is an attempt by the universal church to animate and nurture this missionary call of children and to deepen their catholic identity. It is a movement that encourages children to see that they are part of a worldwide Catholic family with many brothers and sisters worth knowing, supporting and praying for. It takes seriously the truth that children are missionaries, too, by their baptism.

This anniversary gives us a great opportunity to reinvigorate our missionary formation of children. The Holy Childhood Association stands ready to assist families, schools and parishes who are charged with handing on the faith to children. It offers a variety of resources to help plant the seed of Christ's mission in the hearts of our children and bears a lifetime of fruitful proclamation of the Gospel.

## “This Wonderful Adventure”

As mentioned in previous editions of The Mission Link, there has been an emerging movement within the North American Catholic Church of parishes becoming more directly involved in cross-cultural mission. Whereas in decades past, parishes participated indirectly in mission by supported professional missionaries overseas, now more and more parishes are also becoming directly involved in developing a two-way missionary presence with a particular parish either of a foreign land, or of another culture nearby.

This week we spotlight St. Joan of Arc of Minneapolis. St. Joan's parish has been in a relationship with the parish of Tierra Nueva Dos, a squatter settlement on the outskirts of Guatemala City, for about nine years. The focus of the partnership is on relationship-building, according to Mindy Ahler-Olmstead, chair of the St. Joan's parish Committee. "It's like a marriage. The two communities have made a commitment to grow together, to share our lives together." Delegations are a key aspect of building the relationships. About fifty St. Joan's parishioners have gone to Tierra Nueva Dos on five different delegations. Fr. George Wertin accompanied a St. Joan's delegation to Tierra Nueva Dos in 1998. "It was such a wonderful, powerful experience to live in their community," he recalled recently. "We stay in

each others homes," says Ahler-Olmstead, who has made four trips to Tierra Nueva Dos herself. "There is a certain vulnerability and bonding that takes place when you have to trust the other to give you a place to sleep and a place to eat." In July, the Guatemalan community sent its third delegation to Minneapolis. The delegation shared in many experiences with the St. Joan community from "s'mores" and swimming to an overnight retreat with the youth of each parish to discussions of the socio-political situation of each country. Bernardo de Jesus of the Guatemalan community shared some of his thoughts with the St. Joan community at the departure mass. "We should continue together on this journey, this wonderful adventure," he declared. "With renewed effort and our shared spirit, we can work together to build the reign of God today."



A member of the recent Tierra Nueva Dos delegation.

Photos and highlights of the Tierra Nueva Dos delegation can be seen on the St. Joan's fine website at [www.stjoan.com/er3fr.htm](http://www.stjoan.com/er3fr.htm).

**Interested in having your parish be a “parish in mission”? Contact Mike Haasl of the Center for Mission at 651-291-4504 or at [haaslm@archspm.org](mailto:haaslm@archspm.org).**



## MISSIONER SPOTLIGHT!!

### The Center for Mission Spotlights:

**Kevin Mestrich**, lay missionary from Minneapolis, MN who was recently elected to a five-year term as co-director of Maryknoll Mission Association of the Faithful in Ossining, NY. Kevin and his team will oversee activities of 130 Maryknoll lay missionaries in 16 countries around the world. Born in Mpls in 1968, Kevin has served in the East Africa slum, Kibagare, Kenya on the outskirts of Nairobi with poor and orphaned children. He feels called to work to improve the lives of the world's poor and has said: "Serving in Kenya has been a joy for me. Work at the grassroots level is difficult and the hours are long, but the rewards are also many. Watching the children mature and discover their talents is the biggest reward of all." During his missionary career, Kevin has also served in the Bronx, NY, Quito, Ecuador and St. Louis, Mo. Kevin Mestrich now resides in Ossining, NY with his wife, Agnes Methoni and their daughter, Abigail Sandra.



**OCTOBER IS MISSION MONTH-  
PLEASE REMEMBER ALL MISSIONERS IN YOUR PRAYERS.**

# NEWSWORTHY

- **The Center for Mission offers workshop:** Is your parish or group interested in scheduling a power-point presentation by the Center for Mission staff entitled: **BAPTIZED FOR THE WORLD: Catholic Parishes in Mission for New Millennium** For scheduling, contact Mickey Friesen at 651-291-4445.
- **Fr. Stephen Adrian** will speak on **Pacem in Terris and its relevance post 9/11 on Wednesday evening, Oct. 15, 2003 at 7:00 p.m., St. Lawrence Church/Newman Ctr. 1203 5th St. SE, Mpls. (No admission fee)**
- **WORLD MISSION SUNDAY – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2003**

**REMEMBER THE MISSIONS IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING and leave a legacy of faith that reaches to the ends of the earth. For more information, contact Deacon Mickey Friesen, 651-291-4445, or email: [friesenm@archspm.org](mailto:friesenm@archspm.org).**

## WEBSITE WISDOM:

[www.worldmissions-catholicchurch.org](http://www.worldmissions-catholicchurch.org)    [www.holychildusa.org](http://www.holychildusa.org)

[www.augsburg.edu/global](http://www.augsburg.edu/global)    [www.fslf.org](http://www.fslf.org)    [www.coc.org](http://www.coc.org)

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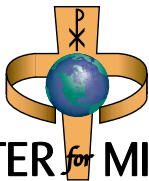
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