



SSpS

# MISSION

AUGUST 2024

Called by the Spirit • Embracing the World

Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters | USA & Caribbean

Com

passion

Be merciful, even as  
your Father is merciful.

Luke 6:36



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## Focus on Mission

Dear Readers and Mission Collaborators,

Frequently during the summer months, I along with companion Sisters visit parish faith communities for the Mission Cooperative Appeal / Propagation of the Faith. While the focus of our visits is sharing life and mission and requesting financial support for our mission needs, I try to awaken in all their call to be "missionary".

And I say to YOU.... **"YOU are a missionary!"**

The Father and the Spirit sent the Son (Jesus) to be the human presence of God among humankind. Through His life, teachings, suffering, death and resurrection Jesus showed humanity God's personal love for each one.

In the Book of Genesis, Chapter 1, we read "God created hu(man)kind in His image; in the divine image God created them...." That's YOU and me! We were created to be an image of God! In a special way, through our BAPTISM, we are sent to be that image of God in our daily life and encounters!

You are a missionary every time you offer a helping hand, a listening ear, an encouraging word, a comforting embrace, an offering of prayer or support to one in need!

Today, embrace the missionary call of YOUR Baptism!

**Sr. Mary Miller, SSpS**  
Editor, SSpS Mission Magazine

# The Year of Compassion

Sr. Kreti Soledad Sanheuz, SSpS

In the Gospel of Mark 10:46-52, we find the narrative about the healing of “the blind man of Jericho”. The social reality of Israel in the time of Jesus considered poor to be those who lived off the aid they received. The blind man of Jericho is nothing more than a poor man, a victim of his illness, someone who does not matter in the great plans of the government power.

The verses that talk about Bartimaeus show that this blind man was a person of tenacity, one who does not give up easily... He begs and his livelihood depends on the goodwill of passers-by. His life would not have been easy.

He calls out: “Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!” The blind man does not ask Jesus for healing, but rather tells him: “Have mercy on me.” He knows that Jesus has compassion... something important will happen to him. Jesus stops and sends for him. ... He stops to give all his attention to that blind man... Jesus responds with the question: “What do you want me to do for you?” ... that is “How can I help you?” And the blind man manifests what he needs: “teacher, that I may regain my sight.”

## *Who is shouting along the way in our social context?*

Faced with the call of Jesus, the blind man does not hesitate to act; he leaves his previous position, abandons the passivity of it, and moves towards a new state of life. His response is immediate and enthusiastic.

Jesus was moved by the blind man. Jesus acts from his heart. He is empathetic. He generates something new in the person. Jesus says to Bartimaeus: “Go, your faith has saved you.” Jesus confirms the active participation of the blind man in his own healing: “Your faith has saved you.”

Jesus teaches us that compassion involves knowing and acting on people’s needs, with them and not without them. He acts publicly to reveal that God’s compassion operates in the midst of everyone. He teaches us that his actions are a path of inner and outer transformation of a human being and that they have social repercussions.

## *What is our way of responding to the cry of those in need?*

### *Do our social actions favor the dignity, change, and autonomy of people in need?*

We have the opportunity to deepen and grow in the awareness that we have been called to share life and mission with one another, with others at the margins, and with all of creation...

Look at created reality with compassionate eyes... Contemplate the ways of God and Jesus. May your compassionate love elicit inclusion and participation. May your listening to the pain and suffering of people, as well as Mother Earth, generate restorative relationships. May your Christian service give rise to a humanizing movement, that people, like nature, may live a sustainable life in our common home, in accordance with God’s original plan.



# MISSIONS

# ONLINE



Sr. Theresa Thanhthao  
Nguyen, SSpS



## OUR MISSION IN ST. KITTS & NEVIS

The Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit of the United States extended their presence to three Caribbean countries: Antigua, Jamaica, and St. Kitts. The mission in St. Kitts commenced in 2006 with a small community in Molineux. The Sisters provide missionary services such as pastoral visits, liturgical planning, catechesis, youth ministry, Religious Education Teaching, and maintain the operations of Holy Spirit Catholic Preschool. In this article, Sister Theresa Thanh Thao Nguyen shared her personal experience as a missionary.

Missionaries aren't always endowed with exceptional gifts or outstanding talents. It's the ordinary individuals, like you and me, who allow God to guide their steps completely, whom He utilizes to accomplish great deeds whether near or far. For generations, missionary narratives have inspired successive generations to go forth and serve. As Confucius once wisely said, "Wherever you go, go with all your heart." One can find God's love anywhere and everywhere, but I feel profoundly blessed where God has assigned me. My three years of mission work have positively transformed my life in ways unmatched by any other experience. This mission has reshaped my understanding of self and my capacity to set and pursue goals. I now recognize my identity and potential in this



*"Synodality enables the entire People of God to advance together, heeding the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, participating in the Church's mission in the communion established by Christ among us."*



world. This recognition of individual potential extends not only to the missionary but also to those whom they educate.

For nearly three years, the Church has undergone a challenging yet fruitful process of consultation, dialogue, and journeying with the faithful, in a spirit of collaboration and openness. The Synod on Synodality, initiated by His Holiness Pope Francis and concluding this year, provides a timely opportunity for discernment to foster closer community and a fuller expression of Church life. The Church acknowledges that synodality is intrinsic to her very nature. Synodality enables the entire People of God to advance together, heeding the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, participating in the Church's mission in the communion established by Christ among us. Ultimately, this journey of shared progress is the most effective means of embodying and implementing the nature of the Church as the pilgrim and missionary People of God (Synodal Preparatory Document, 1). In the spirit of synodality, we continue to heed Pope Francis' call to bear witness to the Good News, to enlarge the space of our tent (Is. 54, 2), reaching out to the marginalized and engaging in spiritual dialogue with one another. There is no truer embodiment of a synodal Church than the journeying together as disciples of Jesus, anchored in the Word and the Eucharist.

Over the past three years of mission, I have walked alongside Jesus, centered in the Word and the Eucharist. These two pillars have nourished my journey toward holiness. Each day, I commute to downtown Basseterre to Immaculate Conception Catholic School, where I teach Christian Living to primary students. The Holy Spirit has infused my students with love and gratitude, evident in their enthusiastic hugs upon my arrival. Given the sizable class, nearly 150 students, I seek the grace of the Holy Spirit to teach effectively and maintain composure amidst the bustling classroom. At times, I also serve as a guidance counselor for the school, aiming to instill Christian values and foster familial and spiritual bonds among the children. One of the highest climaxes during our Catholic Week was delivering food baskets to the elderly. All items were collected from our students. Some staff and I volunteered to wrap the baskets. Afterward teacher, staff, and students delivered them to the community, especially the elderly. It was an amazing experience to serve our community!

Additionally, I engage in various extracurricular activities, including participation in the Immaculate Conception Cathedral Choir, and contributing to the vibrant liturgical life of the parish. At Sacred Heart

Church, I collaborate with the youth for events such as Christmas Caroling, movie nights, Lenten prayers, and Easter celebrations. I also facilitated retreats for Catechists from Sacred Heart Church and St. Joseph in Old Road. On Divine Mercy Sunday, I orchestrated a program for the Feast Day in both parishes, reflecting on God's mercy and compassion. Through these activities, I strive to deepen the faith of the community and foster a culture of mercy and solidarity. I hope and pray that the Divine Mercy may keep touching people hearts as I shared with them on that retreat. Pope Francis invites us to gaze on God's face which is mercy. It is only when we recognize God's face as mercy that the dream of the universal family becomes realizable. But of course, everything always begins with the self. It does not have to be that big at the start.

Despite the challenges encountered in the mission field, including periods of discouragement and disappointment, the unwavering enthusiasm and joy exhibited by the children reaffirm my calling. My interactions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds have enriched my understanding of humanity, spirituality, and leadership. Through this mission, I have witnessed personal growth in faith, hope, and charity, as well as the development of managerial skills and problem-solving abilities. Despite the trials, I remain steadfast in my mission to sow the seeds of faith and entrust the rest to God.

In conclusion, we are all instruments in God's hands, called to extend compassionate service in mission. All mission work is a manifestation of



Little but conscious daily practices of mercy towards others are a part of our Christian duty. This everyday practice will enable the face of God to shine in our world today, a world that is so much in need of the light of his face.

I cherish opportunities to work with youth, as evidenced by my participation in a Life in the Spirit Seminar on Antigua Island. This experience led to my involvement in teaching Confirmation classes at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, culminating in the Sacrament of Confirmation on June 9, 2024. It was an amazing day, to seal and be filled with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Through community service initiatives and visits to hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the elderly, I endeavor to instill in my students a sense of compassion and service.

God's mission, in which each of us plays a part. Let us serve with joyful hearts, dancing in harmony with all of God's creation. As I embark on my next mission assignment in Mexico, I seek the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary, the Icon of the Synodal Church, to accompany us on this radical journey of solidarity with one another and the world.

*"Through these activities, I strive to deepen the faith of the community and foster a culture of mercy & solidarity."*



for the children is awesome. What I love most about the school is the way the classrooms are structured from house area, to reading area, to kitchen area etc. which shows different methods of learning skills. I have always felt comfortable knowing my child/children were well taken care of. They would do a wide variety of activities that help the children to feel welcomed and relaxed, especially the morning devotions where they would sing and worship before going into class sessions. My son used to always come home and talk about what he has learned or did for that day. Let's not talk about my daughter, we would be walking home, and she would start by saying "Mommy school was great today!" even before me asking she would then go on to say "I had seconds for lunch, and it was good.

She would also sing and talk about what she did in school, which always makes me smile knowing that the teachers are doing a great job. My experience at the Holy Spirit Catholic Pre-School is an A+ in my books. To you, the teachers "thank you for the love, care, encouragement, and dedication you have put into teaching our wonderful children. Though at times little children can be a task, you still manage to shower each child with your love. Your love for teaching has molded our children's little minds for their future journey ahead and for that your hard work has not gone unnoticed. For the cooks, your *smackalicious* meals have kept our children's tummies full throughout the day. We say thank you to the cleaner. You work tirelessly to mop, sweep, and clean their messy beds without any hesitance. We are grateful. Also, to the ones who made this all possible, the Holy Spirit Sisters especially Sister Edel herself and the founder of the school, we applaud you for your guidance and vision.



You have created a great environment for our children. Thank you for your tireless efforts in making the school an amazing place for learning. I would recommend anyone to choose the Holy Spirit Catholic Pre-School to send their child/children. Again, we the parents say "thank you" for your generosity and kindness."

- Ms. Khandia Henry

# Generosity & Gratitude

Dear Mission Collaborators and Generous Supporters,

*Do you ever wonder "What happens to my financial donations/contributions to mission causes?" Along with information about specific causes, needs, and so forth that may inform you regarding a request, your financial support "changes lives"! The following address, given by a parent on the occasion of "Pre-school" Graduation at Holy Spirit Catholic Pre-school, Molineaux, St. Kitts, best expresses the "miracle" and blessings of generosity! Your generosity changes lives, affects family life, builds a road to the future! Thank you & God bless you! - Sr. Mary Miller, SSPS*

"Good morning teachers, graduates, parents, guests, and pastor (everyone). On behalf of all the parents, I would like to say a special thanks to the entire staff at the Holy Spirit Catholic Pre-School. Being a first-time mom at the time with my son, I was searching for a pre-school that would best fit to give him a great start. Upon searching, I learned about the Holy Spirit Catholic Pre-School. Not knowing anything about the school other than its location I still went ahead and trusted the process. It was one of the best choices I've ever made. After getting to know the teachers who made me feel confident about the school, I had to register my daughter. The care and development



# TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

## SEASON OF CREATION 2024

SR. ROSE THERESE NOLTA, SSpS JUSTICE AND PEACE COORDINATOR



For each of us water, air and food are essential to life. Creation is essential for us. This year along with our Catholic Church we join Pope Francis' call to the Season of Creation. Each year since 2015 from September 1 to October 4, we take extra time to care for creation. Therefore we invite all of you wherever you are, to join this year's celebration of the Season of Creation.

For 2024 the theme is "To hope and act with Creation," and the symbol is the firstfruits of hope, inspired by Romans 8:19-25. Let me explain a little bit more about this theme and symbol. Often in our times we do not relate to the earth as a gift from our Creator, but more as a resource to be used. Therefore "creation groans". Do you hear the cries of the earth in the hurricanes, wild fires and excessive heat, etc. that we are experiencing in our world today?

As St. Francis often prayed in the Canticle of Creation -- Mother Earth, Sister Water and Brother Wind - so we are encouraged to see all of creation as our Brothers and Sisters. If we think of all creation

as Brothers and Sisters, I think we would respect and appreciate creation more. As I walk to my office, I hear the birds and feel the wind and am so grateful for all creation. How grateful I am for creation. What are you grateful for at this time?

Let us use this time to give thanks for all of creation and do our part to celebrate this Season of Creation. One way is to be aware of creation and give thanks, try to reuse things, recycle things and stop using single-use plastic.

*"All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes."*

Excerpt from: Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 2015.



# A 40-YEAR JOURNEY OF HEALING AND HOPE IN ETHIOPIA

Sr. Maria Fe Divino, SSpS | Ethiopia Region



Doctor/Sr. Lenka Fantiska examines a child.

*"A mission clinic in Ethiopia has bridged distances, serving the local community with essential healthcare and unwavering dedication."*

The saying "Life starts at 40" takes on profound meaning when applied to the story of Weragu Clinic. Nestled in the Arsi Region of Oromo State, Ethiopia, this clinic has served the local community for 40 years.

Twenty-six years ago, the Sisters of St. Anne entrusted the Weragu Clinic to our care. Despite facing challenges like poor infrastructure, rugged roads, insecurity, and isolation due to the absence of communication networks, the clinic persevered.

What started with 15 patients has grown to 125 patients daily. The Weragu Mission Clinic provides various services, including outpatient care, 24-hour delivery services, growth monitoring for children, treatment for acute respiratory diseases, etc.

The clinic also administers immunization services, conducts laboratory tests, implements nutritional programs, and educates the community on health matters. Referral services bridge the gap between our remote location and specialized facilities.

Weragu Clinic used to operate with five lay staff members alongside the dedicated sisters. Tefra, our first co-worker, underwent professional training and became a versatile healthcare provider-serving as a nurse, midwife, physician, and surgeon. The clinic now has five more lay staff members.

Today, as I closed the clinic, two patients came. They traveled for two days on horseback. Many patients come from afar. There are health centers around, but patients prefer our clinic. Our medicines are more affordable, according to them, and they experience compassionate care and quality service.



Sr. Maria Fe Divino with the new lay staff.



# Silence is the Most Profound Prayer

As Fr. George Maloney SJ says in his book, *ALONE WITH THE ALONE*, the greatest silence is that of our spirit with God's Spirit. 'Heart speaks to heart' in silence, the language of self-surrendering love. It's the Holy Spirit within us that teaches us how to pray deeply in our heart.

In our world today, words are very important. Silence is not valued by too many people. As I was waiting in the office for one of our sisters who had a doctor's appointment, there was not one person in the crowded room that did not have a phone in her/his hand. It caused me to wonder about my own prayer life. Is it only words being said? As St Paul says in 1 Cor. 2: 11-13, "Instead of the spirit of the world, we have the Spirit that comes from God to teach us about the gifts God has given us." If in deep silent prayer we are to touch the very depths of God, this can be done only through the Holy Spirit.

In Scripture, we read about the desert experiences of Jesus and St. John the Baptist. These were preparations for their tremendous missionary call and were life-changing and life giving. These experiences were very challenging to me. To really quiet my mind and heart to the extent that I can hear what God is really saying to me is very difficult. However, many times things happen to me that show me what God wants. This is the Spirit too. It seems that God communicates to me in my weakness rather than in my strength.

But I tell myself not to give up. Let's truly ask God to help us reach that depth of prayer where we can just be with God in the depths of our hearts. Let us share our journey with others who are also searching.

**COME SPIRIT OF GOD. LEAD US INTO OUR UNKNOWN DEPTHS!**

*Sr. Pat Snider, SSpS*

Holy Spirit Missionary Association, Directress



There is a possible collaboration with the SVDs in the parish for pastoral ministry, spiritual direction, retreat giving, and ministry with the Filipino and Indonesian migrants. The parish is part of the Hong Kong Diocese under the spiritual leadership of Bishop Stephen Chow, SJ.

In the heart of Asia, a new SSpS mission unfolds. It was officially opened on May 18, the day before the feast of Pentecost. Representing the Congregational Leadership Team (CLT), Sr. Jana Pavla Tóthová graced this significant occasion.

The Far East Province planted the seed for this mission. The SSpS community now comprises Sr. Vera, and Sr. Weronika Maria. A third member from Java, Sr. Ruth Francisca, will join them.



(L-R) Sr. Weronika, Sr. Jana Pavla, and Sr. Vera at the St. Joseph Parish.

## 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



Please accept my Mission offering of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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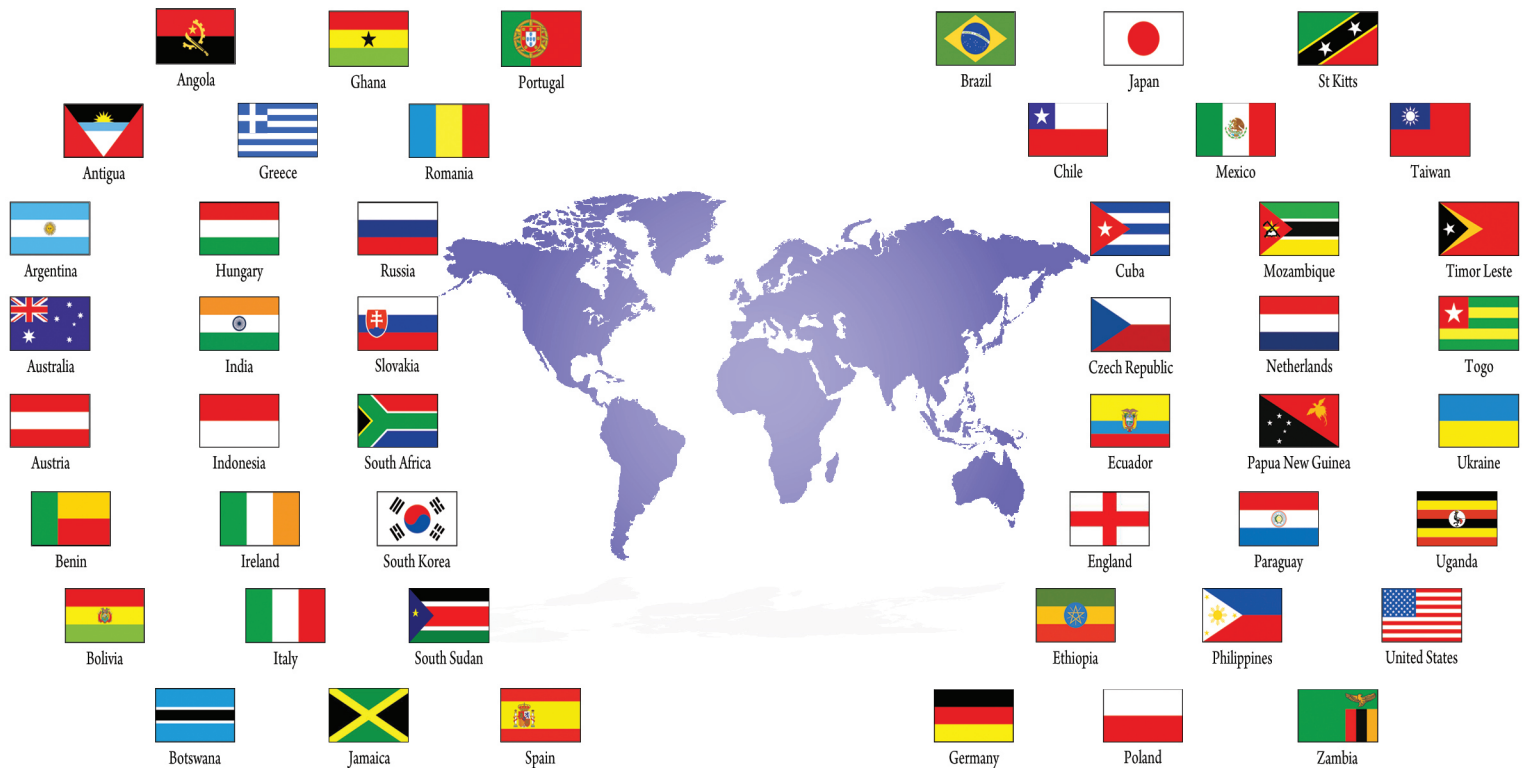


*Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters*

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters are an international—intercultural community of 3,000 Catholic, religious women, serving in 48 countries. Missionary activities include pastoral work and catechesis, education, nursing and health care, social work, adult education, and many other services to promote human dignity.



*Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters*

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