

THE HEART OF A MISSIONARY

Official Newsletter of Commissioned by Christ



Creating Encounters with Christ

BY MICHELLE HAWORTH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year culminated in unique and unanticipated challenges for organizations that serve the poor at home and abroad. In response to health and safety concerns for our missionaries and international travel restrictions due to the pandemic, CBC suspended mission trips in 2020. But through the mercy of God, we are ending on a note of grace.

The tremendous love and dedication of our volunteers, supporters, and board members allowed us to continue creating encounters with Christ's most vulnerable. I am humbled by the many acts of mercy performed daily by CBC missionaries during these times, particularly: feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, comforting the sorrowful, and praying for the living and dead. As one of our missionaries so profoundly observed, "I learned how small my problems really are compared to what other people go through and that the only things in life that truly matter are love and faith."

As we prepare for 2021, M. René Islas, CBC chairman of the board, shares in this newsletter our vision for new programs that adapt to the changing landscape of mission trip experiences. Also included is an introduction to our 2020 Missionary of the Year, and his exceptional work as a missionary evangelizer, as well as a personal appeal from the Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde, Bishop Emeritus of Arlington.

I encourage you to give meaning to everything you do and every life you touch by intentionally incorporating the works of mercy. "These acts of mercy are little things; a smile, a word of consolation, a helping hand." - St. Teresa of Calcutta, Patron Saint of Commissioned by Christ

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CBC Future Next

CBC CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, M. RENÉ ISLAS



CBC Benefactors, Missionaries, Partners, and Friends in Christ, Thank you for your faithful support of CBC. By generously offering your service, financial gifts, and prayers, more than 900 members of the lay faithful – primarily from the Diocese of Arlington – have deepened their faith through the missionary experiences organized by CBC over the past 12 years. You are helping us inspire zeal and love for the Roman Catholic Church around the world.

While we can be confident that our work to date glorifies the Lord, we are warned throughout the Bible about complacency and resting on our laurels. Challenging situations, like the COVID-19 health crisis and severely restricted travel, demanded swift action to continue to deliver on our mission. As a result, we initiated efforts to renew our program design in ways that enhance our developmental faith formation program and ensure that we increase our ability to assist the materially and spiritually hungry.

CBC is in the process of integrating proprietary mobile technology tools, writing spiritual formation materials, publishing CBC catechetical resources, and building a team to expand our capacity to serve missionaries and the most vulnerable near our homes and throughout the world. These tools

will allow us to thrive at a time when we must engage missionary work at a distance and until we are able to travel safely to mission sites.

The enhanced program, consistent with CBC's legacy, has five goals:

- Bring Catholic adults and families closer to Christ,
- Inspire greater zeal and love for the Roman Catholic Church around the world,
- Form strong Catholic identities, deepen knowledge of the faith, and habituate sound spiritual practices,
- Facilitate Catholics to engage in spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and
- Build community among fellow Christians at home and throughout the world.

Our hope is that these new programs will be available by March 2021. Please reach out Michelle Haworth (michelle.haworth@commissionedbychrist.org) if you are interested in sharing your gifts and talents as we prepare for the future. I also encourage you to visit our website for ongoing opportunities to engage in the spiritual and corporal works of mercy throughout the year.

Peace in Christ,
M. René Islas

CBC Missionary of the Year: Father Friar Antonio Maria Speedy



CBC was honored to present Fr. Friar Antonio Maria Speedy with the 2020 "Bishop Paul S. Loverde Missionary Award for Selfless Service" at the October 23 Virtual Benefit

Celebration. Fr. Antonio, Australian priest and missionary evangelizer, joined the Poor Friars in Italy two decades ago and now administers in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux at the parish of the Holy Family Church in Dulac, Louisiana, in the heart of Bayou country.

The Poor Friars began in Italy, but in 2012 expanded to create a new community in southern Louisiana where Fr. Antonio is the superior. He works closely with a deacon friar and four nuns in a small religious order known for "evangelizing on the streets of the world." They have taken a vow of poverty, travel by hitch hiking, and rely completely on the generosity of others. Fr. Antonio is known for evangelizing from a boat traveling through the back waters of the Bayou encouraging people to return to the Holy Mass and the sacraments. "Our mission is through simplicity, through poverty, but also through competence to send souls back to the sacraments. The heart of our mission is to get souls to heaven through Christ."

After COVID-19 subsides, Fr. Antonio and his order hope to send a mission team to Australia to continue God's work. For more information go to <https://poorfriars.org>.



60 VOLUNTEERS PICKED OVER 4,000 POUNDS OF CORN WITH THE ST. LUCY PROJECT IN COLONIAL BEACH, VA

Serving During the Pandemic

Spiritual and corporal works of mercy are a cornerstone of CBC's ministry and mission experience. While we were not able to serve internationally this past year, CBC missionaries kept busy volunteering for One Day Missions (ODM). ODM's are monthly service opportunities for adults and families who desire to participate in the works of mercy in our local communities. Organizations that we assisted include the Queen of Peace Soup Kitchen, Catholic Charities' St. Lucy Food Project, Healthy Harvest Food Bank, The Lamb Center, the Vichop Hypothermia Shelter, and Missionaries of Charity Home for the Aging.

Our missionaries demonstrated an incredible outpouring of support and love, embracing those in material need as well as the homebound in need of spiritual works of mercy.



25 VOLUNTEERS CREATED 1,400 BAGGED LUNCHES FOR THE QUEEN OF PEACE SOUP KITCHEN IN WASHINGTON, DC



12 VOLUNTEERS PREPARED DINNER AND OVERNIGHTED WITH THE HOMELESS AT THE VICHOP HYPOTHERMIA SHELTER IN ALEXANDRIA, VA

CBC Virtual Benefit Celebration

On Friday, October 23, Commissioned by Christ successfully held its first Virtual Benefit Event celebrating 12 years of forming missionaries and serving the poor through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

We had a fabulous line up of guests and are happy to be able to share them all on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/CBCMissionTrips. Our guests included:

- Welcome and Prayer with Bishop Emeritus Paul S. Loverde
- Honorary CBC Sponsor Very Rev. Patrick Posey, Arlington Mission Office, and CBC missionary Mary Grace Coltharp
- Musical performer and Catholic Spotify Star Seph Schlueter
- Fr. Joseph Uhen and a spotlight on Santissimo Sacramento Catholic Church and mission center in Piura, Peru
- Missionary of the Year recipient Australian priest and missionary evangelizer Fr. Friar Antonio Maria Speedy

Gratitude and thanksgiving to everyone that helped to make this event so wonderful. In particular, thank you to our generous donors, auction bidders, matching campaign contributors, and benefit sponsors: Arlington Mission Office, American Solutions for Business, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington, Catholic Diocese of Arlington, Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Hallow Catholic Media & Prayer App, Holy Family Catholic Church, Innovative Business Group, Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Riveron Consulting, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual School, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, St. Joseph Catholic Church in Herndon, St. Philip Catholic Church, and The Basilica of St. Mary.



Get Involved

Senior citizens are suffering under the weight of pandemic-related isolation and loneliness. Consider signing up to write letters to the residents at the Missionaries of Charity Home for the Aging. These men and women need our friendship, consolation, and companionship.

The Lamb Center is a daytime drop-in homeless shelter for individuals who are experiencing homelessness in Fairfax, VA. Volunteers serve meals, launder clothing, sort donations, and provide fellowship to guests. 2021 dates are now available for sign up.

CBC is responding to Pope Francis' invitation to celebrate a Jubilee Year for the Earth, called the Special Laudato Si' Anniversary Year, with the creation of a faith and action community. Together we will study, discern, and respond to Laudato Si' and our commission to care for God's creation. Sign up now to participate at the beginning of 2021.

www.commissionedbychrist.org/volunteer-locally/

Support CBC

HELP OUR CRITICAL MISSION

Become a monthly donor - CaritasBuilders is a special enrollment program of dedicated people who support CBC as monthly donors. Caritas means charity, eternal love, unconditional love. When you enroll in CaritasBuilders, your monthly contribution supports works of mercy and the mission life of the Roman Catholic Church at home and abroad. Any amount will make an impact.

Make a one-time donation - Your generosity assists in the growth of new programs, covers supply costs for our service projects, assists in the formation of missionaries, provides financial aid to those who otherwise could not participate, supports the cost of chaplains on each trip, and stabilizes operational needs.

www.commissionedbychrist.org/donate

Thank you for your continued prayers and generosity.