A Mission Prayer

Heavenly Father, when your only begotten Son Jesus Christ rose from the dead, he commissioned his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations” and you remind us that through our Baptism we are made sharers in the mission of the Church. Empower us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be courageous and zealous in bearing witness to the Gospel, so that the mission entrusted to the Church, which is still very far from completion, may find new and efficacious expressions that bring life and light to the world. Help us make it possible for all peoples to experience the saving love and mercy of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

Amen.
**Water for life in Homabay Diocese**

St. Cloud/Catholic Diocese of Homa Bay Partnership is one of the successful fruits of the 1997 initiative by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to facilitate the building of Solidarity across countries and cultures through Catholic Dioceses. St. Cloud-Homa Bay Relationship would begin just two years later; that is in 1999 through the facilitation of the Catholic Relief Services (CRS). By twinning Catholic Dioceses separated by vast oceans, the US conference of Bishops wanted to enable for the experience, among those who share one baptism, of different cultures, creeds, races, and indeed the richness of diversity that defines humanity. It was therefore in the hope of the conference, through CRS that friends would build beyond dioceses to parishes, to small Christian communities and eventually to families.

The St. Cloud / Catholic Diocese of Homa Bay Partnership has continued flourishing with every passing year. Since 1999, eight delegations have travelled from St. Cloud to Homa Bay, with the ninth such delegation just concluded their visit in March, 2019. There have also been seven delegations from the Catholic Diocese of Homa Bay to St. Cloud with the eighth one possibly in the year 2020.

In the recent past, St. Cloud through the partnership guided by a triparte agreement signed in the year 2004 which has three parties; the Diocese of St. Cloud, CRS and the Catholic Diocese of Homa Bay. As the partnership hits its 20th Anniversary (1999 – 2019), there is every reason to thank God for its many achievements, mostly the water tanks that benefited many institutions.

Across the world, the cost of supplying water to homes and institutions is increasing. Water bills in mains connected to communities continue to rise, while water deliveries in peri-urban and rural areas are also costly and not accessible.

So it’s no surprise that more and more people are turning to rain harvesting as a cost-effective way to supply water for their needs. A properly designed Rain Harvesting system can supply some or all of your household water needs, offering significant cost savings and a clear return on investment. This is the typical scenario in Homabay; water supply is a big challenge, most institutions and homes depend on rain water and seasonal rivers making them spend more time and resources in search of water.

During drought the institutions; churches and schools suffer most. The Catholic Diocese of Homabay is proud of this great achievement, we received 62 (sixty two) water tanks of 5000 litres each from St. Cloud through Rev. Fr. John Phillip Odero. The tanks have been installed and in use. By harvesting of rain water the institutions continue to have water that can subsidize their safe and clean water needs until the next rainfall, more so drinking water. In addition, the Diocese finds joy and fulfillment of service in seeing schools and parishes with harvested water for their daily use thus reduced water borne diseases and reaching out to one important aspect on human life ‘water that forms 80% of body fluids’

This article was written by Beatrice Otieno, Leadership team
Homabay Kenya

_Dede Girls High School_
Every day when I open the mail here at the Mission Office, I am for sure humbled and am even often brought to tears by the generosity, love and support of so many people from around the diocese and beyond. As you may not know, the Mission Office/Society for the Propagation of the Faith is not an office of the diocese and therefore we do not receive any funding from the annual diocesan appeal and any other fundraising the diocese might do. In order for us to do our ministry and live out our life of mission to the world, we rely completely on donor gifts such as estates and undesignated funds as well as the collections for Catholic Relief Services, Rice Bowl, World Mission Sunday, Mass intentions, St. Peter the Apostle, Missionary Appeals and the Advent/Christmas Appeal.

These last 9 years in the office, I have had the pleasure of meeting some of these donors as they have stopped in or we have personally connected when I have been out in the diocese. Unfortunately, many I will never meet as they have since passed and left our office in their will and estates, or just simply don’t want to be acknowledged. This is still such a blessing. Though it took a little time to track him down, one such donor I had the honor of meeting a couple weeks ago in assisted living, was Joseph. We spent about an hour together chatting about family, life, careers, fishing, challenges and joys in the church,… We shared some pictures but mostly shared time and laughter. Through reading the catechism and our diocesan newspaper, Joseph found out about our office and what we do, and with the help of staff, started sending in a dollar here and a dollar there to support our ministry. For about the last 4 months, each week we send Joseph sometimes 2 thank you notes with a personal message for how much he and his gifts mean to us. Joseph is a dear man with a generous heart and a generous soul and just like all of you other donors, just wants to contribute to the goodness of all that is happening in mission. Joseph and many others I have encountered have helped me to better understand that it doesn’t take huge dollars to actively be living out our call to mission. It takes love, intention, commitment, openness, inclusion, sacrifice,…. Thank you, Joseph, for all that you do and for all that you are. In your own words, ‘you do good things for people.’

This article was written by Elizabeth Neville, Director of the Mission Office, as a reflection on the generosity of the people who support us here at the Mission Office.

Diocesan Ministry Day
Join us at Diocesan Ministry Day on Monday, Sept. 30, 2019. Rediscover the joy of living out our baptismal call as we are “Called to be...Prepared to do...”.

Featuring...
Laura Kelly Fanucci, keynote speaker
2 sets of workshops on many topics
Networking opportunities
Lunchtime round table discussions
Enhance your faith
Mass with Bishop Kettler

Our Partners are coming to visit!!
We are very excited that our partners from Homa Bay Kenya will be visiting us mid to late April, 2020. There will be lots of ways for you to be involved and get to know our wonderful friends:

- Offer to host a delegate in your home
- Help provide transportation to delegates throughout their stay
- Attend events throughout our diocese where our delegates will be present

If you are able to host a delegate in your home or able to help with transportation please contact the mission office and let us know.
Extraordinary Mission Month

What is World Mission Sunday?
Every year, Catholic parishes around the world are asked to celebrate World Mission Sunday. This day honors our call as baptized Catholics to be missionary disciples, and invites us to remember as we gather around the Eucharistic table the countless brothers and sisters across the globe who are doing the same, all of us united in Holy Communion through Christ’s sacrificial love. We also find unity through our own loving sacrifice of prayer and financial giving on this day for those others most in need throughout the universal church.

Baptized and Sent
In his message for this year’s 93rd World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis reminds us:
“I am a mission, always: you are a mission, always; every baptized man and woman is a mission.... Each of us is a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God’s love....”

World Mission Sunday celebrates the missionary nature of our faith, that which sets us apart from other agencies of good work – that we are universal, we are a people of unity, we are the living sign of Christ’s heart in our world today, following the example set before us for over 2000 years!

World Mission Rosary Day—Friday, October 4th
Young people and adults all over the world will join in prayer on Friday, October 4th for Missionary Childhood Day, a day when Catholic children, young people and adults everywhere commit to praying for one another. Missionary Childhood Day takes place every first Friday in October. Catholic schools and parishes around our diocese will be celebrating this day, as we kick-off Mission Month and the Month of the Rosary, by praying the World Mission Rosary.

Embracing the world in prayer

The World Mission Rosary was envisioned by Archbishop Fulton John Sheen, then the national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, in 1951. He made the request on a radio show that his listeners “Embrace the world in prayer.” To do so he introduced this Rosary.

Its uniqueness is in the five colors represented in each of the decades. Color symbolism in a rosary is a gentle reminder on which to focus our prayers.

This rosary honors the work of mission, our call to be missioners, and world unity and peace through its special emphasis on each of the Earth’s regions, where prayers are needed for all people who live and play and pray just like each of us! Each region is represented by a different color, it is not only a beautiful rosary, but rich in symbolism.

Colors of the World Mission Rosary
The colors/areas of the Mission Rosary include:

1. **Green** – for the forests and grasslands of Africa
2. **Red** – calling to mind the fire of faith that brought missioners to the Americas (US, Canada, Latin America and Native Americans)
3. **White** – symbolizing Europe, the home of the Holy Father
4. **Blue** – for the ocean surrounding the Islands of the Pacific (Australia/Oceana)
5. **Yellow** – symbolizing the morning light of the East and ‘beginning of civilization’ for Asia/ Middle East

*Note: These colors do not need to go in any particular order in the making of the Rosary.*

Make Rosaries
We have been encouraging schools and parishes in our Diocese to pray the World Mission Rosary (especially in October, which is Mission Month as well as the Month of the Rosary). But **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

Please consider making World Mission Rosaries for us to share with students and parishioners who would like to pray this beautiful prayer. It could be a fun project to do with your mission group, classroom or family.

Use the color information on the left to make them, or contact the Mission Office for more information.
The mission of Camp St. Michael is Clear
by M. J. Simmons

For three years now, the children, youth, and friends of St. Michael Church in Motley, along with their family from Sacred Heart Church in Staples, have come together to experience a church day camp for kids. Founded to help give young an informal way to build faith and offer youth service opportunities, Camp St. Michael has quickly become a beloved experience for all. Under the direction of staff and volunteers, the three days of camp take over every corner of the church block.

The essentials of a good camp are present; outside activities, live worship music, a water day, plentiful food, and faith stories. A highlight every year has been the annual Slip and Slide Kickball game that always ends up in a huge water fight. It was led this year by our priest and the visiting deacon enjoyed the adventure as well.

What makes Camp St. Michael different than VBS or other children’s events is that we create it all ourselves. The curriculum is written by our staff and is based off of the happenings in our parish communities. When our campers are studying the Word, it is carefully selected to connect with what our people are learning as well. This year’s theme went along with building the family of God, which all of our parishes are doing due to the process of the ACC’s.

We also have two very unusual aspects of our camp. First, we use the example of our staff and junior staff to teach our campers how to serve. Through the moments of our Helping Hands service time, we learn to care for others in ways that children are able. Over the three years, we have tied blankets, visited the Motley Food Shelf, collected food, learned from our past Diocesan Mission Educator Katy Lentz, updated our gardens around the church, helping in the rectory, and cleaned out the garage. Much of our service is lead and supported by teens who are junior staff doing the event preparation. Their example of commitment motivates the children to future opportunities for their service to others.

Secondly, Camp St. Michael has a strong concentration in Art and Music. Camp includes an artist in residence, Elizabeth Lunsford, who teaches the children and staff about Sacred Art. There are no simple camp crafts here. Students have made art that has led their parents to tears; from acrylic collage to oil pastels with watercolors. Our campers become artists before our very eyes and the staff joins in as well. The garage is taken over by the smell of paint and covered in symbols of our faith that teach us all the importance of the Arts in our parishes.

Along with the visual, we have Praise, Worship, Prayer, and Liturgy; all times to share in music and forming understandings about how music reaches the faithful. With Brianna Granby, a local music educator, and a team of motley musicians, our campers and staff sing at the top of their lungs and the bottom of their hearts. Camp St. Michael is known for waking up the neighborhood as the opening event is Praise on the steps of the church.

This year’s Camp St. Michael was run on July 15, 16, and 17, 2019. From 9:00am to 3:30pm, children sing, play, listen, pray, share, and learn about the Catholic faith. The last day of camp we had a closing Mass and Family Pot Luck to follow with an Art Show presenting the sacred art that has been created.

As well look back at camp, there is a thought that comes to our minds. How can we take this wonderful experience and use it for the good of the people of God? This is the truest mission of Camp St. Michael and it is clear. Take these three days and use what we have learned to love our people to life in Christ. We can do this. After all, we, the campers and staff of Camp St. Michael are excited about sharing our amazing faith.
On August 14th, Shawn Crumb, a Maryknoll Priest from our Diocese doing mission in China, stopped by while he was in Minnesota visiting. He told us about his life teaching English at a university and supporting the local Church in China. It was wonderful to hear his stories!

In a recent email correspondence, Shawn had the following to say about the ministry he is doing in China:

“I visited a parish in the countryside. Maryknoll worked at that parish years ago and some of the people still remember the priest who served the community. The Chinese priest, who is there, is grateful to Maryknoll's work and knows a lot of the Maryknoll and church history in the village. I concelebrated mass there and one of the priests translated my homily. I was blessed to see the fruits of the early missioners' labor and how the people now continue to live out and share their faith in the community. I'm still teaching English at a university, which is going well, but keeps me busy. I enjoy getting to know the students and having conversations with them. Some speak English very well and I'm amazed how well they communicate. Others need improvement and I'm trying to help them get better.”