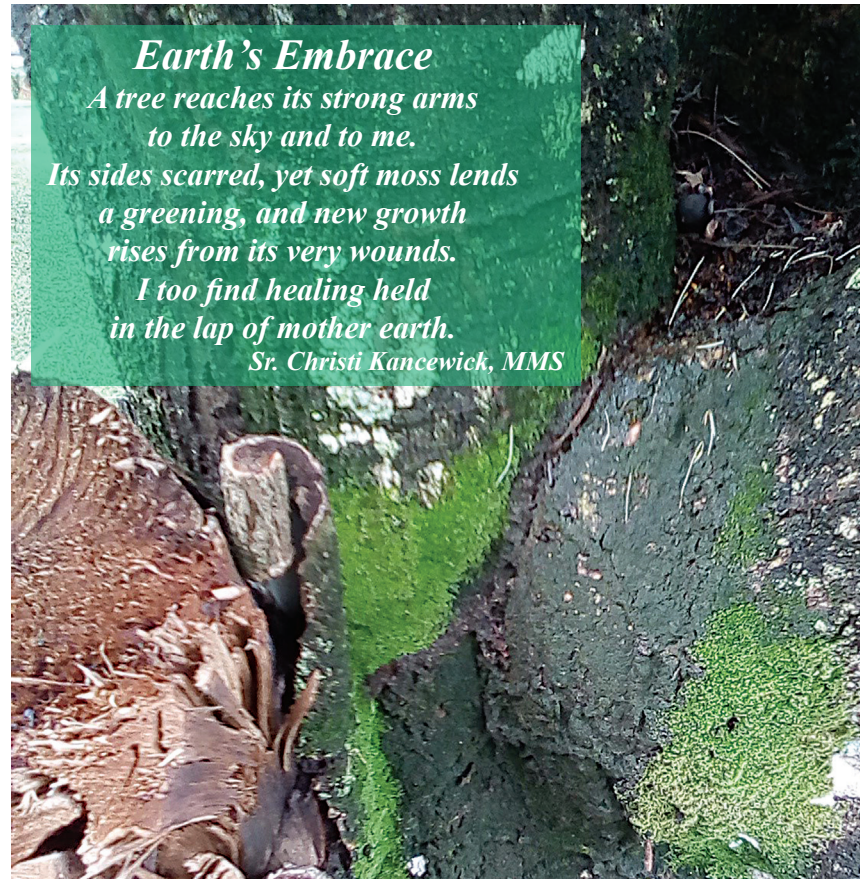


MMS Living and Teaching Sustainability:

- **The Philippines:** installation of 36 solar panels in the buildings within the Collantes compound in Quezon City. We chose Sunfinity Philippines, a company that observes justice principles while ensuring the safety of creation through green, sustainable and eco-friendly energy.
- **Tororo, Uganda:** both practicing and teaching composting.
- **Malawi:** distribution of trees to new mothers.
- **Kerala, South India:** Ayushya Center teaches youth about “the rhythm of the universe.” Sister Eliza Kuppohackel shares, “Value education takes place under these trees. The trees teach them [the youth] to be interconnected, self-giving, loving and caring. They learn to tune in to the rhythm and music of the universe.”
- **U.S.:** sharing land for gardening with the local Hmong immigrant community.
- **Society Leadership Team in London:** support of Laudato Si (Pope Francis’ powerful message on our moral responsibility to care for creation) platform of seven-year journey toward total sustainability.
- **Germany/UK:** Sisters and Associate Karl-Heinz Heyer led an outdoor sensing experience in 2020 entitled Transformation.



A child plants a tree at the MMS health center in Rubanda, Uganda.



*Earth's Embrace
A tree reaches its strong arms
to the sky and to me.
Its sides scarred, yet soft moss lends
a greening, and new growth
rises from its very wounds.
I too find healing held
in the lap of mother earth.
Sr. Christi Kancewick, MMS*

Medical Mission Sisters is an international religious community of Catholic women who commit ourselves to promote healing and wholeness in all aspects of life. Founded in 1925, our Sisters and Associates continue our healing mission in 17 countries on five continents.



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Our call and mission is to be one with all that has life.

Part I



*Returning
Restoring
Rejoicing**

**from Pope Francis' Prayer for the Care of Creation*

The Sacredness of the Land

- excerpts from Sister Elly Verrijt, MMS

“The First Peoples from many places remind us that our identity is based on our connection with the land. They tell us that the land and the water of the places where we were born are the elements from which our bones and body were shaped. Some aboriginal groups greet their guests with the words, “Where is your name written in the Earth?”

Everywhere and in all times people have experienced land as sacred, as promise, as gift of God. Some places are holy, set aside for ritual and prayers. Some native indigenous elders say, “A proper relationship to the land and the natural world requires the whole of our being.” The land is holy, it is the great womb. Every season the land receives the seeds put in her and when harvest comes, there is celebration. Then, again, for another winter or dry season survival is secured.

It is an irony of our times that those who know the art of growing food, composting and preserving the land often live a life in poverty. People made poor very often live on land that has been made poor. We have experienced that the dignity and self-worth of a people vanishes once they are driven out of their ‘bone country’ for various reasons.

Wherever we live it is our task and call to care for the integrity of the land. A soil, alive and cared for by soulful labor, is life passed on to future generations. All real work for a sustainable Earth begins with the earth beneath our feet. This is an art, more than knowledge about gardening or agriculture.

It is up to us to care for the integrity of the land, wherever we are. Then we become a part of the unbroken procession of caretakers of the land that has been passed on from generation to generation for millennia. Then we can say that we have come home to Gaia and the circle of her daughters and sons.”



Sister Rita makes shea butter with a neighbor in Kulmasa, Ghana.

Kulmasa, Ghana

MMS in Kulmasa continue their development of a new ministry in an impoverished and deprived area of Northern Ghana. One project includes an eco-demo farm which is the beginnings of a bigger agri-business that will produce food and animal products in commercial quantities to support the operations of the health clinic.

The three Sisters who moved here only six months ago are already practicing organic farming, raising enough vegetables to share with their neighbors. An urgent need currently is for fencing to encircle the 30-acre property. Sister Rita explains, “Currently the whole environment is dry and empty. Our animals are let out to find to eat whatever little they can. To run an eco-farm means we will have greens when the entire village is dry. This will attract animals and nomads who move from village to village with their herds of cattle. Protection of the land and our property is needed all year-round. During the dry season herdsman set fire to vegetation in hopes that when the dew falls their cattle can graze on the small grass that grows. This is illegal but is still done. Fencing around the MMS property will include safety measures to protect against spreading fires.”



Living in the Netherlands, Sister Elly is a pioneer in Ecological Spirituality. She is an international workshop leader and retreat guide, a Spiritual Guide and Transition Coach and is involved in transformation for a New Earth Consciousness and Earth Healing. She says, “If we know the Universe Story and the process of the Evolution we see how at the right moment great changes happened in the process of evolution and the journey of the Cosmos went on. If this is the cosmic pattern then this pattern also is true for our personal life. We are cosmos.”

Sister Elly is providing workshops on eco-spirituality every two weeks through Zoom to our Sisters in East Africa. Her input supports the work of Sisters Josephine Nafula and Immaculate Tusingwire who are certified Laudato Si animators.

In February 2021 The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) joined MMS in Tororo, Uganda in launching a Laudato Si garden. The event included workshops on practical ways of planning for the MMS Eco-Education and healing center and ways to reduce individual carbon footprints. During the blessing of the garden each Sister planted a tree and then together they danced and sang in celebration of the newly blessed garden.