

Compassion, Collaboration, Accomplishment ...

Summer 2024

... With Children ...

Thanks to Erica Micchelli, our Unit Administrator, a few Medical Mission Sisters have been interacting with preschoolers at a local daycare center. Erica's son, Dominic, has been building relationships with MMS here on campus since he was born. He has grown to know and love the Sisters who will stop by to say hello to him if he is in the office. Inspired by her son's relationship with the Sisters, Erica arranged for some of them to spend an occasional hour with Dominic's classmates at their daycare center.

The children are intrigued with the "grandmothers" who come to do crafts, play games and just hang out with them. Sr. MT Winter also visited, her guitar in hand, ready to lead a sing-along.

The Sisters are enjoying their contact with the little ones immensely. When asked about their time at the pre-school, they immediately break into big smiles. They appreciate the innocence and curiosity of the three-year-olds, and the children flourish with the Sisters' attention. One little boy who rarely speaks during the day attached himself to Sister Vera Sheenan and chattered continuously while sitting beside her.

As for Dominic? He says he wants to be a Sister when he grows up.

Top photo: Sister Vera Sheenan has a delightful conversation with Frieda.

Bottom photo: Dominic snuggles against Sister Martina Schaefer's knee.



...With the Sick ...

This past spring, several Medical Mission Sisters and Associates and friends were honored, along with other volunteers, by Fox Chase Cancer Center (FCCC) for their contributions during the 2023 year at the hospital. Sister Mag Moran received the Bronze medal for spending over 200 hours distributing donated free items such as blankets, reading material and comfort items to patients and their companions.



She organized the group of Sisters, Associates and friends who make and donate the blankets, hats, and surgical post-operative supplies shared with the patients.

The group donated 94 items in 2023; this number doesn't include the 218 pocket crosses made by Sister Teresa Arac!

Our dear late Sister Barbara Collings (d. 2023) was also honored as a volunteer who worked in the surgical waiting room for five years.

Volunteers who make and donate items for FCCC include, from left to right: Associate Selena Wilson, OP, Sisters Mag Moran (standing), Teresa Arac, Phyllis Backer (standing), Christi Kancewick and Rosemary Ryan.



A neighbor from Mission Green, Lola Grey, also contributes hand-made items for the effort!



Associate Linda Townsend enjoys sewing small bags for patients and their families.



Angela Friend, a friend, and the hairdresser for many MMS, works on a blanket to donate.

...With Refugees...

“Can you help!” Venezuelan Sisters Maigualida Riera and Marielena Ridad knew Associate Betsy Hague would be the right person to ask. In the past couple of years, Betsy has been devoted to teaching English to some of the young Sisters in Venezuela—to the extent of taking challenging classes and earning a certificate as a teacher of English to non-native English speakers.

When two young men, Brayan and Andres, made their way from Venezuela to the U.S. border and crossed in Texas, the older son, Brayan, was put on a bus to New York City. However, because Andres is only 17, he was retained in one of the enormous holding facilities for minors in Texas. He would not be released until someone agreed to become his guardian. The two Sisters, Maigualida and Marielena, are close friends with the boys’ family and pleaded with Betsy on their behalf.

Betsy said yes, of course I will help!

The process of transferring Andres to Betsy’s care took many months and five different case workers. Betsy also provides a home for Brayan, who moved from New York. When Brayan joined Andres at her home, Betsy described a grand celebration for the young men to be back together again.

Learning to teach English to the Spanish-speaking Sisters has improved Betsy’s Spanish language skills, but communicating with the boys was still extremely difficult. Betsy invited Sister Pat Gootee, who had worked for ten years in Venezuela and 40 years in Peru, to join their household for several weeks to assist in their conversations. Sister Pat, aged 91, was delighted with her “new mission,” and the three quickly and easily fell into a loving, affectionate friendship.

Betsy enrolled Andres in the same school her children and grandchildren attended; he tested well enough to enter the 9th grade, even though he had only a 6th-grade education. Despite the challenging language barrier, Andres has been doing very well. He is attending summer sessions of English through the public school. He is eager to become fluent in English, and he and Betsy hope his English will progress enough to take a full load of classes as a tenth grader this fall.

Andres is an avid boxer, and it didn’t take long for him to locate a club near their home. He won most of his boxing matches in Venezuela. Betsy had been searching for weeks for help in representing Andres in court. Andres found a lawyer from the boxing club to represent him; the lawyer waived his legal fees, and Betsy would only need to cover the court fees.

Betsy describes Brayan as a strong, hard worker who loves to help. She is currently looking for an unpaid apprenticeship position where he can learn a trade. As the many pieces of providing a home for the two have fallen into place, Betsy says, “Isn’t it amazing how the Spirit brings everything together?”



Associate Betsy and Sister Pat (in blue vest) with Brayan and Andres. Right photo: Sr. Pat gives Andres a hug.





Medical Mission Sisters
8400 Pine Rd.
Philadelphia, PA 19111
215.742.6100



Sister Pat Edelen assists in the t-shirt memorial erected in April to recognize individuals killed by gun violence.

Do you prefer giving on your phone?
Scan the QR code and make your contribution to
MedicalMission Sisters.



Writer/Editor: Tina Burkholder
July 2024
www.medicalmissionsisters.org

All of your gifts during this appeal will go to the care of our retired Sisters.

Recently, while visiting us from London, our Society Coordinator, Sr. Agnes Lanfermann noted that, in our elder years, the trappings that have kept us feeling confident, secure, and in control are diminishing. How then, do we find value? What does this mean for women who are deeply unaccustomed to sitting idle? Sr. Agnes challenged us to view our aging as “just another pioneering mission.” She encouraged us to be open in our vulnerability with each other and others, with humility, and integrity. We know in many ways it is easier for us to attend to the ‘tasks at hand’ rather than reveal our fears or helplessness.

We hope you join us in your own way, in this pioneering mission of vulnerability and honesty. Our angry, broken world needs the strength of our compassion, integrity, and open-hearted tenderness and mercy.

Thank you for your generous support for our retired Sisters!

Ways to Give

Online: www.medicalmissionsisters.org. All information provided to MMS is completely secure.

Mail: Fill out the enclosed envelope and return with your gift.

Sustaining Gifts: You choose how much your bank automatically deducts from your checking account once a month.

Call Sherri Gannon at 215.742.6100 with questions.

****** Please note that you will be receiving your MMS calendar in August this year. We will start celebrating our 100 year anniversary in September! The calendar begins in September 2024 and runs through the end of 2025.**