



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! Each year, usually in summer, the Pontifical Mission Society conducts its Missionary Cooperation Appeal. You may recall our welcoming of missionary priests who preach at the Weekend Masses and speak about their particular work in foreign countries. Next weekend, the Missionary Cooperation Appeal will happen for us and we will welcome to our parish Sisters Frankie Vaughan and Denise Elliott both of whom are Medical Missionary Sisters. I share below a short descriptive of the Medical Missionary Sisters and call your attention this week to their good work. Please note the special Missionary Co-op Envelope in your envelope

packet for next week and know that your donation goes directly to that good cause.

Peace,

Fr. Rogers

THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY SISTERS

We are a community of dedicated women with 450 Canonical members and 100 Associates (women and men) who share life and our own unique expertise with women, children and men on five continents today. We are committed to promote healing and wholeness in all aspects of life.

History

Medical Mission Sisters (MMS) were founded in September 1925 in Washington, D.C., by a young Austrian doctor named Anna Dengel. Working in what was then North India in the early 1920s, Anna witnessed first-hand the complications and deaths of countless Muslim women and babies during childbirth due to their customs which prohibited them from receiving certain aspects of medical care from men.

Anna went to the U.S. to begin raising funds and awareness. She had a vision that a group of women health professionals who dedicated their lives to God could make a difference in helping women have access to the health care they deserved. She saw this not only as a work of charity, but also one of justice. After about a year of "Making the Cause Known", Anna was joined by Dr. Joanna Lyons, Mary Evelyn Flieger, RN, and Agnes Marie Ulbrich, RN, and on September 30, 1925, the MMS began. Our headquarters were in Washington, D.C. until the late 1930s when we were invited by Cardinal Dennis Dougherty to Philadelphia. Philadelphia remains our North American headquarters today. Our international headquarters is in London, England.

From its inception we have offered care and compassion to millions of individuals in the world. As the times and the needs have evolved, so too has our focus in mission — from curative, to include preventative, promotive, community-based, and holistic health care. We also advocate and work for the health of our Earth and for a just sharing of our world's limited resources. In every ministry, each of us strives to be a healing presence in the community of life. Conscious that "justice is essential to comprehensive healing, health and wellbeing," today we also address problems of widespread poverty, hunger and malnutrition, unemployment, illiteracy, inadequate housing and unsafe water supplies. Anna Dengel recognized long ago the unjust and oppressive structures that deprived Muslim women of basic health care.

In addition to our Canonical members who make life vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, we have had Associate members for almost 50 years. These women and men share the mission of healing presence and commit themselves to live it purposefully in their individual areas of service and ways of life.