

MISSION UPDATE

United States Catholic Mission Association

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Short-Term Mission Calls for Flexibility, Transformation & Giggles

By Genevieve L. Mougey,
Associate Director of the USCMA

I'm American through and through! I find that at the core of my nature, I have expectations of self and others that can sometimes lead to confusion, disappointment and well, in general just real problems—typical “American.” I don't like contradictions. I live and work in a church of functioning on the color spectrum. I find though, that when I am out of my element, being challenged in hard and new ways I try to make the world around me black and white. Mission is not the place in the church to live in the realm of black and white. Mission is where I would encourage people to go to embrace the beauty of vibrant color and even finding new colors to introduce to people of the black and white spectrum. That is why I think mission is such a good place for me. I am constantly being challenged to live in the varied hues of mission. Sometimes the challenge is gentle; sometimes it is hard and even

forced. But regardless of the method of the challenge, I find transformation within the heart of all that I encounter in this mission existence and from my own transformation to be a beautiful portrait integrating many shades of colors.

I met three women at the end of June who changed my entire understanding of how I can live and be in community by embracing contradictions. Aside from the realities of mission, I find that it continues to be very easy to speak with others about what mission is, how people are serving the mission of Christ through their own mission stories, and to speak about the sacramental call of mission. After all, baptism is such a wonderful way to introduce a conversation of mission! What I find hard to speak about is the personal transformation that happens to me through my time with the missioned community. I have put off writing this reflection for as long as I can. I fear a couple of things with this writing, one that my exuberance for the experience will fade, that my words will be misunderstood, taken out of context or neglected. These are my fears for no real reason other than the very raw understanding that I have never felt more vulnerable, more exposed, more challenged than when I was in mission.

The three women that went on this trip with me were Janelle, our native Miami Cuban leader; Jany, our native Cuban transplant to Miami who is studying nursing (no child left our house without a glob of hand sanitizer); and María Inés Leáñez; , our native Venezuelan now living in Miami who is a teacher at a

Photo credit: María Inés Leáñez; Jany and Genevieve are swarmed by neighborhood kids!

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We pray

that the Christian communities of Asia may
proclaim the Gospel with fervor, witnessing
to its beauty with the joy of faith.

Pope Benedict XVI

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From the Executive Director

FR. MICHAEL MONTOYA, MJ

Quoting *Redemptoris missio*, Pope Benedict XVI's World Mission Sunday message once again emphasized that "missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive." All throughout summer, there have been many of these activities, particularly of those involved in short term mission programs. We pray and hope that these experiences truly ignite the passion for God's mission in everything you do.

Many of you have also supported USCMA in promoting mission and global solidarity through the Mission Appeals programs in the Arch/dioceses. We thank all of you for sharing your mission experiences. As we keep saying, you and your stories are the best "advertisement" for mission. We thank all the parishes that welcomed us and the Mission Offices for inviting us this year.

Many of you have heard about the Synod on New Evangelization which will be held in October 2012. It is hoped that the process of discernment called forth in the *lineamenta* leading up to the actual synod can give new life to our identity as missionaries by virtue of our baptism. The *lineamenta* challenges us "to have the courage to forge new paths" (#5) to effectively respond to the challenges of the times. It encourages "finding new approaches to evangelization so as 'to be Church' in today's ever-changing social and cultural situations" (#9), and calls us to evaluate our pastoral approach on the basis of the missionary character of our programs and activities (#10). I encourage

all of you to read the *lineamenta* and use it as a tool for reflection and discussions among your groups. The link to the *lineamenta* can be found on our website www.uscatholicmission.org.

The Periodic Paper insert in this issue is a document that we all need to read as missionaries. Although the intention is to come up with recommendations of conduct as we deal with interfaith relations, this joint document of the World Council of Churches, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and World Evangelical Alliance truly gives all of us basic guideposts as we do mission. The Preamble frames the whole trajectory set forth by the document in mission. The very first sentence states, "Mission belongs to the very being of the Church."

And of course, I would be remiss if I do not talk about the upcoming USCMA Annual Mission Conference, "Push out into the deep... Communion and Missionary Discipleship," in Miami on October 28-30. There is really a lot of excitement about this conference. All preparations are now in full swing. We thank the Mission Network of Miami for all the exciting ideas and efforts done thus far. If you have not registered, you do not want to miss this. There is still time to register and invite others to participate. The online registration is on our website, as well as the link to hotel accommodation.

This will also be the last Mission Conference that I am organizing on behalf of the USCMA. As you know, I have been blessed to be in my position as Executive Director of USCMA for the past 6 years. The blessings are countless, as are the challenges that have made me grow in my commitment to God's

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From the Board President

TERESITA GONZALEZ DELA MAZA

The call to communion and missionary discipleship is a call to "Push Out Into the Deep...."

October is already here, and there is so much to look forward to. Our conference is fast approaching and the theme is once again in relationship with the context of our time. Here in Miami there are many plans being made, and there is a great deal of excitement to welcome the missionaries! In many ways, this conference taking place here in the church of Miami is serving locally to push us out of our own comfort zones and work together to welcome mission in a new way. I am grateful to USCMA for coming here and giving us this opportunity! I hope you have all registered already, if you have not done so, don't wait another minute! We will try to have the sunshine. You bring your love of mission and the Lord will certainly push us ALL out into the deep!

"Pushing out" is a process involving transitions and new directions. This is very much part of our experience right now in USCMA and also for us here in Miami.

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Short Term Mission: *continued from page 1*



Photo credit: Genevieve Mougey; María Inés Leáñez enjoys some time reading with the neighborhood kids.

local Catholic High School in Miami.

We continually joked about the make-up of the group. Four single women, living in the barrio for two weeks. Three of the women are native Spanish speakers. Only the European-American (me) doesn't speak Spanish. By and large, language was not an issue for the group to overcome simply because they never let me go anywhere on my own. I was fine with that decision.

To be quite honest, our group dynamic was AWESOME!! We all came from different life experiences which formed our own understanding of mission- **even if we didn't readily identify ourselves as missionaries.** Yet, we all found our common ground bound within the **framework of our faith.** **María Inés Leáñez; states succinctly, "We are here to accompany the people from this area of the city. We are accompanying the community in the different services we are attending."** **We spent our mornings with the kids and our afternoons going on sick visits, saying rosaries and communion visits.**

While it was such a significant part of our daily life to participate in faith life of the community, really, I found my happiness in the giggles of the kids. They were so excited to see us in the mornings, in the afternoons, in the evenings. It was a bit overwhelming on occasion how the kids knew where we were. They knew where we were going before we did, and we were always accompanied by our own entourage of followers. When we would rest in the heat of the day, we kept the front door of the house open to allow a breeze. Little voices calling over and over, "Genoveva, Genoveva!!!" Sometimes I would respond and pretend to be angry and yell, "Silencio!" and then we could hear them giggling even more.

Janelle Jay, our leader, summed up her feelings by saying, "I consider myself to be someone who is just called to be here. God keeps calling me here. I don't know why exactly, I just know it's a journey, a path." Our path to mission was not always clear or well defined but it

was a path well worn by the missionaries who had been here before us. They had witnessed the presence of God in their own mission trip. They enabled us to walk with relative ease into the barrio and establish ourselves as sisters in Christ.

Initially, the call to be involved in short-term mission looks differently to each person. It certainly did for the four of us. I was participating because I wanted to have another mission trip to really help form my own understanding of mission. I identify myself in conversations as being a missionary. For me though, there have been **times I have felt like a fraud. I haven't been in mission for extended periods of times.** This trip was only 2 weeks. Yet, the transformation that happened within me changed how I interact in the world today. It changed how I respond in my home community.

The trip to the DR was something entirely different for Jany Gonzalez. Jany, originally from Cuba, immigrated to the US when she was 13. **Her father won the lottery. "God called me to come here to help others in need. That has meant that I have gone back...to my previous life in Cuba, so it's a lot of remembering how I used to be, how I used to live. Sometimes a person needs that, to reconsider life again, to be a better person, and to help others."** Jany was our resident nurse. Kids with no injuries would seek her attention for some Band-Aids or some ointment for non-existent scrapes.

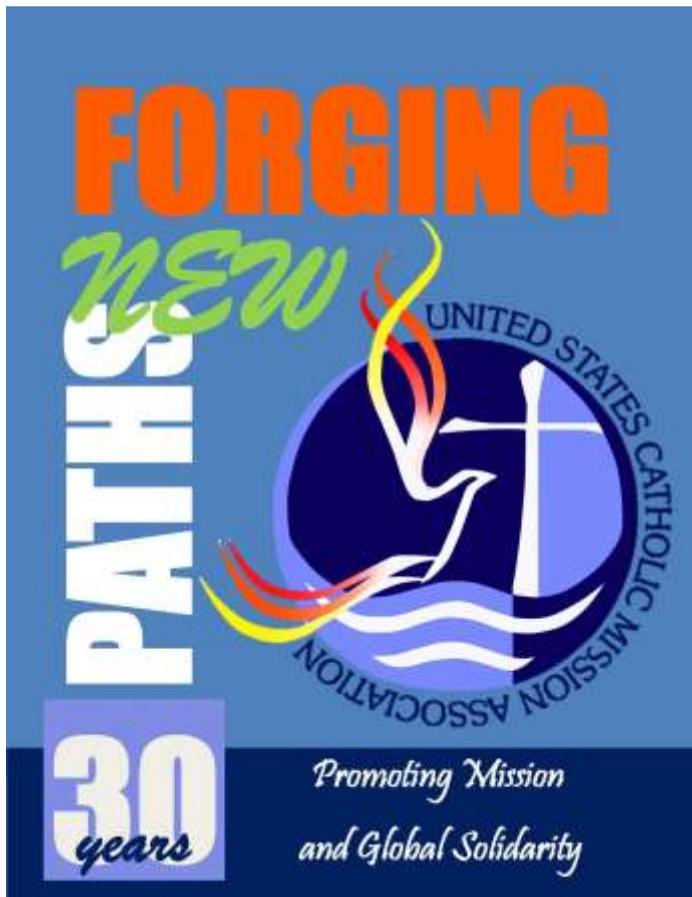
I found my time at the camp to be a challenge to my American sensibilities — bring out the cultural baggage. Clocks were not a big commitment at the camp. The jóvenes (high school students) themselves while filled with enthusiasm were still learning the skills needed to negotiate what it means to take charge and how to be in charge. The camp I worked in had a small classroom and we stuffed 40 five and six year olds into one room. With me was a jovencita who spoke no English. I was certain it was my own personal hell. **Don't get me wrong, the kids were wonderful, but rarely have I met children who were so demanding. They were in need of time and attention. Thankfully we had an abundance of both, but it did take a toll and was draining. When some of us were exhausted, others were usually energized and able to be with the kids.**

Yet, the paradox is that these are the same kids who ensure their friends and cousins and siblings had enough food to eat, if they didn't they would **literally feed them out of the same bowl that they are eating from.** The house where we stayed allowed us to see this quite often. The food came sometimes from the house where the kids lived, or it came from the owners of the local tienda who made sure the kids had food and ensured that the kids were bathed at least once a week.

So that is the "lay of the land". I spent the first week of my time in the DR silently plotting how I could get back to the states, keeping in mind that I would need to come up with a viable reason for Fr. Michael and Tery Gonzalez of why I was leaving. I was exhausted from the heat, lack of sleep and overabundance of Dominican flies and mosquitos. But, whether it was the relief from knowing that María Inés was going to be coming with me on my second week at the camp, or if it was because I surrendered- I survived. I woke up

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The United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA) Celebrates 30 Years



Washington (Agenzia Fides) - The United States Catholic Mission Association celebrates 30 years of promoting mission and global solidarity. "The 30 years anniversary of USCMA is a celebration of loyalty and radical commitment to God's mission of all U.S. Catholic missionaries. We thank God for the invitation to participate in his mission and we pray that we may continue to be open to the Holy Spirit promptings as we respond to the ever changing realities of mission," says Fr. Michael Montoya, MJ, Executive Director of USCMA, in a statement sent to Fides.

The anniversary will be celebrated at the annual Mission Conference to be held in Miami, from October 28 to 30. Over the past 30 years these conferences have been venues for missionaries to gather, share and deepen their mission perspectives, as well as, strengthen collaboration and partnership in the mission world.

When USCMA started in 1981, the membership of the new mission association was composed of the mission commit-

tees of both the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). "We have come a long way since that initial beginning as an association - says Fr. Montoya -. And now we even have a lay missionary as President of the Board". The Executive Director of USCMA also points out that, moving around the country and meeting other missionary groups, is always amazing to realize all the many wonderful initiatives in mission coming out of conversations initiated by the USCMA. The USCMA stands in a direct line to two national mission agencies: the Mission Secretariat (1949-1969) and the U.S. Catholic Mission Council (1969-1980). (SL) (Agenzia Fides 02/09/2011) +

In the midst of difficulties and persecution "it is the time for mission in Asia"

Guwahati (Agenzia Fides) - Amid the difficulties, poverty or persecution, the Christians of Asia "are called to renew the proclamation of the Word, mission, evangelization", says His Exc. Mgr. Thomas Menampampil SDB, Indian Archbishop of Guwahati (northeastern India) and President of the Office for Evangelization, within the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). From his privileged point of view, that supervises the challenges of mission in the vast continent, the Archbishop comments on the condition and prospects of the Christian communities in Asia. To the discriminated Christians in Pakistan or victims of violence in India; to those who suffer from the limitations of religious freedom in Central Asia; to communities which are sometimes persecuted in countries like Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, China; to the small or large and flourishing realities in Korea or in the Philippines; to all the faithful of the continent, the Archbishop sends a heartfelt message of hope through Fides: "it is precisely when difficulties arise, that people look for answers. It is when problems are intense, that the questions that people pose become deeper. May be this is such an hour for Asia. 'How long more ', the psalmist used to ask in agony. During the monsoons, it is when the heat becomes unbearable, that the rains fall in full measure. May the proclaimers of the Word in Asia win a hearing, as the land is thirsty for a message of because the earth is thirsty of the message, justice, peace, uprightness that Christ once preached". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 13/09/2011)+

Cardinal Rodríguez Maradiaga denounces violence: the country experiences



Rev. Michael Montoya, MJ, Executive Director of USCMA with Cardinal Rodríguez at Mission Congress 2010 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

San Pedro Sula (Agenzia Fides) - The wave of violence that has steeped the country with blood has been severely condemned by Cardinal Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga, Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, who stressed: "The crisis is big, and not simply economic, but moral. When we lose respect for life, when for any reason, other peoples lives are taken away, then we are acting in the wrong. "The Cardinal said that the commandment of God's law" Thou shalt not kill " seems to have been completely forgotten in the country, to the point that young people are joining the new groups of assassins.

"Many times governments forget the fundamental principle of Christianity, which is the common good, according to which you cannot think only of individual good, but that of the entire community. When the authorities are elected to govern a country, they should make big efforts to be of service to everyone", added the Cardinal.

With regard to the national crisis of public education, Cardinal Rodríguez Maradiaga underlined that until we reach the root of the problem, education will continue to be poor. "It is not just a question of salaries, but it is a problem of changing mentality", he said. "It is right that a teacher is well paid, and this you can understand, but at the same time teachers must be responsible and not let children and young people remain uneducated".

The Cardinal made these statements at a conference held during the charity dinner at the foundation " Hogar nourishes" in San Pedro Sula (about 180 km from Tegucigalpa),

on 8 September. This foundation works in a special way with children from Honduras who suffer from malnutrition. The other person who was invited to the conference on the same evening, was the President of Panama, Ricardo Martinelli. "I would feel happier if after tonight, 'Hogar nourishes ' was able to take care of more children because children's future depends on good nutrition", concluded the Cardinal. The foundation is organized to care of 100 children a day, but right now there are only 30 due to lack of resources. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 12/09/2011)

Cardinal Rodríguez was the Keynote Speaker at the 2010 Mission Congress in Albuquerque, New Mexico. +

Clashes between Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas. The Bishop: "Religious leaders peacemaker operators"

Ambon (Agenzia Fides) - Clashes between Christians and Muslims which occurred yesterday, September 11, shocked the town of Ambon, the capital of the Moluccas, the islands in eastern Indonesian archipelago. As local sources of Fides inform, the clashes caused 3 deaths (a Christian and two Muslims), 20 wounded and 40 slightly injured. The tension remains high, but today in Ambon calmness has been restored, thanks to the prompt intervention of the police, local authorities, religious leaders. Also because the cause of the riots was a misunderstanding and a misrepresented episode due to bad information.

In an interview with Fides, His Exc. Mgr. Petrus Canisius Mandagi, Bishop of Amboina, reconstructs what happened: "It all started because of an ordinary car accident, in which the driver of a motorcycle taxi, a Muslim who was passing through the Christian quarter of Ambon was involved". The city in fact - after the conflict between Christians and Muslims 10 years ago - is still divided into a completely Christian neighborhood and a completely Muslim one. "Christians - the Bishop continues - rescued the man and tried to take him to hospital but unfortunately he died during transport. At this point a series of false and provocative text messages started to circulate, which spoke of a Muslim killed by Christians. So this is how the clashes started. The Muslims began attacking Christians across the border of two districts. The Christian citizens, in turn, attacked the Muslims. The clashes caused deaths and injuries: we are deeply saddened".

During "the hectic afternoon", the police immediately inter

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Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World Recommendations for Conduct

World Council of Churches
Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue
World Evangelical Alliance

Preamble:

Mission belongs to the very being of the church. Proclaiming the word of God and witnessing to the world is essential for every Christian. At the same time, it is necessary to do so according to gospel principles, with full respect and love for all human beings.

Aware of the tensions between people and communities of different religious convictions and the varied interpretations of Christian witness, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID), the World Council of Churches (WCC) and, at the invitation of the WCC, the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), met during a period of 5 years to reflect and produce this document to serve as a set of recommendations for conduct on Christian witness around the world. This document does not intend to be a theological statement on mission but to address practical issues associated with Christian witness in a multi-religious world.

The purpose of this document is to encourage churches, church councils and mission agencies to reflect on their current practices and to use the recommendations in this document to prepare, where appropriate, their own guidelines for their witness and mission among those of different religions among those who do not profess any particular religion. It is hoped that

Christians across the world will study this document in the light of their own practices in witnessing to their faith in Christ, both by word and deed.

A basis for Christian witness

1. For Christians it is a privilege and joy to give an accounting for the hope that is within them and to do so with gentleness and respect (cf. 1 Peter 3: 15).
2. Jesus Christ is the supreme witness (cf. John 18: 37). Christian witness is always a sharing in his witness, which takes the form of proclamation of the kingdom, service to neighbor and the total gift of self even if that act of giving leads to the cross. Just as the Father sent the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit, so believers are sent in mission to witness in word and action to the love of the triune God.
3. The example and teaching of Jesus Christ and of the early church must be the guides for Christian mission. For two millennia Christians have **sought to follow Christ's way by sharing the good news of God's kingdom** (cf. Luke 4: 16-20).
4. Christian witness in a pluralistic world includes engaging in dialogue with people of different religions and cultures (cf. Acts 17: 22-28).
5. In some contexts, living and proclaiming the gospel is difficult, hindered or even prohibited, yet Christians are commissioned by Christ to contin-

ue faithfully in solidarity with one another in their witness to him (cf. Matthew 28 :19-20; Mark 16: 14-18; Luke 24: 44-48; John 20: 21; Acts 1: 8).

6. If Christians engage in appropriate methods of exercising mission by resorting to deception and coercive means, they betray the gospel and may cause suffering to others. Such departures call for repentance and remind us of our need for **God's continuing grace. (cf. Romans 3: 23).**

7. Christians affirm that while it is their responsibility to witness to Christ, conversion is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit (cf. John 16: 7-9; Acts 10: 44-47). They recognize that the Spirit blows where the Spirit wills in ways over which no human being has control (cf. John 3: 8).

Principles

Christians are called to adhere to the following **principles as they seek to fulfill Christ's mission** in an appropriate manner, particularly within interreligious contexts.

1. Acting in God's love. Christians believe that God is the source of all love and, accordingly, in their witness they are called to live lives of love and to love their neighbor as themselves (cf. Matthew 22: 34-40; John 14:15).

2. Imitating Jesus Christ. In all aspects of life, and especially in their witness, Christians are called to follow the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, sharing his love, giving glory and honour to God the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. John 20: 21-23).

3. Christian virtues. Christians are called to conduct themselves with integrity, charity, compassion and humility, and to overcome all arrogance, condescension and disparagement (cf. Galatians 5: 22).

4. Acts of service and justice. Christians are called to act justly and to love tenderly (cf. Micah 6: 8). They are further called to serve others and in so doing to recognize Christ in the least of their sisters and brothers (cf. Matthew 25: 45). Acts of service, such as providing education, health care, relief services and acts of justice and advocacy are an integral part of witnessing to the gospel. The exploitation of situations of poverty and need has no place in Christian outreach. Christians should denounce and refrain from offering all forms of allurements, including financial incentives and rewards, in their acts of service.

5. Discernment in ministries of healing. As an integral part of their witness to the gospel, Christians exercise ministries of healing. They are called to exercise discernment as they carry out these ministries, fully respecting human dignity and ensuring that the vulnerability of people and their need for healing are not exploited.

6. Rejection of violence. Christians are called to reject all forms of violence, even psychological or social, including the abuse of power in their witness. They also reject violence, unjust discrimination or repression by any religious or secular authority, including the violation or destruction of places of worship, sacred symbols or texts.

7. Freedom of religion and belief. Religious freedom including the right to publicly profess, practice, propagate and change one's religion flows from the very dignity of the human person which is grounded in the creation of all human beings in the image and likeness of God (cf. Genesis 1: 26). Thus, all human beings have equal rights and responsibilities. Where any religion is instrumentalized for political ends, or where religious persecution occurs, Christians are called to engage in a prophetic witness denouncing such actions.

8. Mutual respect and solidarity. Christians are called to commit themselves to work with all people in mutual respect, promoting together justice,

peace and the common good. Interreligious cooperation is an essential dimension of such commitment.

9. Respect for all people. Christians recognize that the gospel both challenges and enriches cultures. Even when the gospel challenges certain aspects of cultures, Christians are called to respect all people. Christians are also called to discern elements in their own cultures that are challenged by the gospel.

10. Renouncing false witness. Christians are to speak sincerely and respectfully; they are to listen in order to learn about and understand others' beliefs and practices, and are encouraged to acknowledge and appreciate what is true and good in them. Any comment or critical approach should be made in a spirit of mutual respect, making sure not to bear false witness concerning other religions.

11. Ensuring personal discernment. Christians are to acknowledge that changing one's religion is a decisive step that must be accompanied by sufficient time for adequate reflection and preparation, through a process ensuring full personal freedom.

12. Building interreligious relationships. Christians should continue to build relationships of respect and trust with people of different religions so as to facilitate deeper mutual understanding, reconciliation and cooperation for the common good.

Recommendations

The Third Consultation organized by the World Council of Churches and the PCID of the Holy See in collaboration with World Evangelical Alliance with participation from the largest Christian families of faith (Catholic, Orthodox,

Protestant, Evangelical and Pentecostal), having acted in a spirit of ecumenical cooperation to prepare this document for consideration by churches, national and regional confessional bodies and mission organizations, and especially those working in interreligious contexts, recommends that these bodies:

1. *study* the issues set out in this document and where appropriate formulate guidelines for conduct regarding Christian witness applicable to their particular contexts. Where possible this should be done ecumenically, and in consultation with representatives of other religions.

2. *build* relationships of respect and trust with people of all religions, in particular at institutional levels between churches and other religious communities, engaging in on-going interreligious dialogue as part of their Christian commitment. In certain contexts, where years of tension and conflict have created deep suspicions and breaches of trust between and among communities, interreligious dialogue can provide new opportunities for resolving conflicts, restoring justice, healing of memories, reconciliation and peace-building.

3. *encourage* Christians to strengthen their own religious identity and faith while deepening their knowledge and understanding of different religions, and to do so also taking into account the perspectives of the adherents of those religions. Christians should avoid misrepresenting the beliefs and practices of people of different religions.

4. *cooperate* with other religious communities engaging in interreligious advocacy towards justice and the common good and, wherever possible, standing together in solidarity with people who are in situations of conflict.

5. *call* on their governments to ensure that freedom of religion is properly and comprehensively respected, recognizing that in many countries religious institutions and persons are inhibited from exercising their mission.

6. *pray* for their neighbours and their well-being, recognizing that prayer is integral to who we are and what we do, as well as to Christ's mission.

Appendix: Background to the Document

1. In today's world there is increasing collaboration among Christians and between Christians and followers of different religions. The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) of the Holy See and the World Council of Churches' Programme on Interreligious Dialogue Cooperation (WCC-IRDC) have a history of such collaboration. Examples of themes on which the PCID/WCC-IRDC have collaborated in the past are: Interreligious Marriage (1994-1997), Interreligious Prayer (1997-1998) and African Religiosity (2000-2004). This document is a result of their work together.

2. There are increasing interreligious tensions in the world today, including violence and the loss of human life. Politics, economics and other factors play a role in these tensions. Christians too are sometimes involved in these conflicts, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, either as those who are persecuted or as those participating in violence. In response to this the PCID and WCC-IRDC decided to address the issues involved in a joint process towards producing shared recommendations for conduct on Christian witness. The WCC-IRDC invited the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) to participate in this process, and they have gladly done so.

3. Initially two consultations were held: the first, in Lariano, Italy, in May 2006, was entitled "**Assessing the Reality**" where representatives of different religions shared their views and experiences on the question of conversion. A statement from the consultation reads in part: "**We affirm that, while everyone has a right to invite others to an understanding of their faith, it should not be exercised by violating others' rights and religious sensibilities.** Freedom of religion enjoins upon all of us the equally non-negotiable responsibility to respect faiths other than our own, and never to denigrate, vilify or misrepresent them for the purpose of affirming superiority of our faith."

4. The second, an inter-Christian consultation, was held in Toulouse, France, in August 2007, to reflect on these same issues. Questions on Family and Community, Respect for Others, Economy, Marketing and Competition, and Violence and Politics were thoroughly discussed. The pastoral and missionary issues around these topics became the background for theological reflection and for the principles developed in this document. Each issue is important in its own right and deserves more attention that can be given in these recommendations.

5. The participants of the third (inter-Christian) consultation met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 25-28, January 2011 and finalized this document.

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vened to quell the unrest, siding along the border. But even religious leaders offered an immediate response. The Bishop explains to Fides: "I met, with other Christian leaders, Muslim religious leaders. As religious leader of the Moluccas we have launched a joint appeal to the people, to clarify the incident, calling for an end to all violence, which brings only destruction and pain. If there is an accident or a negative episode, one should immediately start to talk and not resort to violence. Let us defend peace together, we said, which is the most important asset".

Mgr. Mandagi says he is confident: "Everything seems clear. In the coming days we will intensify meetings between religious leaders, to build harmony and peace. The ideal path is dialogue, to be pursued at all levels. We will do our best".

The Moluccas were the scene of a conflict between Christians and Muslims between 1999 and 2002. The Bishop of Amboina underlines: "We still have in our memory problems concerning the past. Yesterday's episode means that there is still a lot to be done to build peace, day by day, step by step. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 12/09/2011)+

Seek New Paths of Evangelisation for Church and Society

VATICAN CITY, 24 SEP 2011 (VIS) - At 6.1.5 p.m. today in the main hall of the Seminary of Freiburg im Breisgau the Holy Father met with council members of the Central Committee for German Catholics. The committee was founded in 1952 to support the apostolic work of the Catholic Church.

The Holy Father focused on the "exposure programmes" promoted by the committee whereby, for a certain period, experts in various sectors share the daily lives of poor people in developing countries "in order to see the world through their eyes and hence to learn how to practise solidarity. ... Let us imagine", the Pope said, "that an exposure programme of this kind were to take place here in Germany. Experts from a far country would ... find much to admire here, for example the prosperity, the order and the efficiency. But looking on with unprejudiced eyes, they would also see plenty of poverty: poverty in human relations and poverty in the religious sphere.

"We live at a time that is broadly characterised by a subliminal relativism that penetrates every area of life", he added. "Sometimes this relativism becomes aggressive, when it opposes those who claim to know where the truth or meaning of life is to be found. And we observe that this relativism exerts more and more influence on human relationships and on society. ... Many

no longer seem capable of any form of self-denial or of making a sacrifice for others. Even the altruistic commitment to the common good, in the social and cultural sphere or on behalf of the needy, is in decline. Others are now quite incapable of committing themselves unreservedly to a single partner".

"We see that in our affluent western world much is lacking. Many people lack experience of God's goodness. They no longer find any point of contact with the mainstream Churches and their traditional structures. But why is this? I think this is a question on which we must reflect very seriously. Addressing it is the principal task of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation. But naturally it is something that concerns us all".

In this context the Holy Father noted that "the Church in Germany is superbly organised". However, he asked, "behind the structures, is there also a corresponding spiritual strength, the strength of faith in a living God? We must honestly admit that we have more than enough by way of structure but not enough by way of Spirit. I would add: the real crisis facing the Church in the western world is a crisis of faith. If we do not find a way of genuinely renewing our faith, all structural reform will remain ineffective".

"We are called to seek new paths of evangelisation. Small communities could be one such path, where friendships are lived and deepened in regular communal adoration before God", Benedict XVI suggested. "There we find people who speak of these small faith experiences at their workplace and within their circle of family and friends, and in so doing bear witness to a new closeness between Church and society".

Following the meeting, the Holy Father moved on to the fairgrounds of Freiburg im Breisgau to preside at a prayer vigil with young people. PV-GERMANY/ VIS 20110925 (550) +

Fruitful Collaboration between Christians and Muslims

VATICAN CITY, 23 SEP 2011 (VIS) - At the apostolic nunciature in Berlin at 9 a.m. today, the Holy Father met with representatives of the Muslim community in Germany. Muslims in Germany number around 4.5 million; 70 percent of them are of Turkish origin while others come from Arab countries, the Balkans and Iran.

In his remarks to the group the Pope recalled how "from the 1970s onwards, the presence of numerous Muslim families has increasingly become a distinguishing mark of this country". In this context he highlighted the importance of constant effort, not only "for peaceful coexistence, but also for the contribution that each

An agreement to control child trafficking between Benin and the Congo has been signed

Pointe-Noire (Agenzia Fides) - Benin and the Republic of Congo have signed an agreement to control the trafficking of children between the two countries. From some recent data it is clear that 1800 children from Benin, mainly between 11 and 18, have been victims of the trade towards Congo, forced to work in the field of trade or fisheries, or as domestic servants. "This is a timely intervention to prevent children from being victims of commercial and domestic abuse", said the UNICEF representative in Congo. The agreement was signed on Sept. 20 by the Social Affairs Ministers of both countries in Pointe Noire, the economic capital of Congo, where there is a large community of people from Benin. "These children are deprived of sleep. If they commit the slightest mistake in the house, they are likely to remain without food for days. They are treated like slaves", said the responsible of the Movement of Mothers for Peace, Solidarity and Development. A similar arrangement is also planned between the Republic of Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo. In fact, children often cross the river that separates the two countries, in search of better living conditions. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 26/09/2011) +

Presidential elections in November: the Church lines up 30,000 electoral observers

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides) - There are 30,000 electoral observers that the Catholic Church is preparing to line up to help ensure the regularity of the presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to be held on November 28. Taking into account that the observers sent by the European Union are 120, we understand the importance of the contribution of the Catholic observers at the next consultation. The figure was announced on Sept. 23 during the opening ceremony of the civics and electoral program entrusted by the local Bishops to the Justice and Peace Commission".

On presenting the initiative, His Exc. Mgr. Nicolas Djomo, Bishop of Tshumbe and President of the National Episcopal Conference of Congo (NECC), stressed that "our action affects all the Congolese people, without distinction, without discrimination".

As Mgr. Djomo explained, the Bishops hope that "the living conditions of the Congolese improve. To achieve this, peace is essential. When you have peace, it gives a chance for democracy and economic growth. "(L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 26/09/2011) +

can make towards building up the common good in this society.

"Many Muslims attribute great importance to the religious dimension of life", he added. "At times this is thought provocative in a society that tends to marginalise religion or at most to assign it a place among the individual's personal choices. The Catholic Church firmly advocates that due recognition be given to the public dimension of religious adherence. In an overwhelmingly pluralist society, this demand is not unimportant. Care must be taken to guarantee that others are always treated with respect. Mutual respect grows only on the basis of agreement on certain inalienable values that are proper to human nature, in particular the inviolable dignity of every single person".

The Holy Father went on: "In Germany - as in many other countries, not only Western ones - this common frame of reference is articulated by the Constitution, whose juridical content is binding on every citizen, whether he belong to a faith community or not. Naturally, discussion over the best formulation of principles like freedom of public worship is vast and open-ended, yet it is significant that the Basic Law expresses them in a way that is still valid today at a distance of over sixty years".

"The reason for this seems to me to lie in the fact that the fathers of the Basic Law at that important moment were fully conscious of the need to find particularly solid ground with which all citizens would be able to identify. In seeking this, they did not prescind from their own religious beliefs. ... But they knew they had to engage with the followers of other religions and none: common ground was found in the recognition of some inalienable rights that are proper to human nature and precede every positive formulation. In this way, an essentially homogeneous society laid the foundations that we today consider valid for a markedly pluralistic world, foundations that actually point out the evident limits of pluralism: it is inconceivable, in fact, that a society could survive in the long term without consensus on fundamental ethical values".

At the end of his address, Benedict XVI underlined the importance of fruitful collaboration between Christians and Muslims as part of the process of building "a society that differs in many respects from what we brought with us from the past. As believers, setting out from our respective convictions, we can offer an important witness in many key areas of life in society", such as "the protection of the family based on marriage, respect for life in every phase of its natural course or the promotion of greater social justice".

At the end of the meeting the Pope travelled to Berlin airport where, at 10 a.m., he boarded a plane to travel to Erfurt".
PV-GERMANY/ +

Remembering Former USCMA Director Fr. Anthony Bellagamba, IMC



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Fr. Anthony Bellagamba, IMC. "Fr. Tony" as he was affectionately known was born in Italy and entered into the Consolata Missioners. He served in mission work in Africa for many years.

In 1974 Fr. Bellagamba was appointed the Executive Director of what was then called the United States Catholic Mission Council, which in 1981 became the United

States Catholic Mission Association and Fr. Bellagamba continued to serve as the Executive Director. He was instrumental in helping to transform the US Catholic Mission Council into the US Catholic Mission Association as it currently exists.

According to Fr. Franco Cellana, Regional Superior of the Consolata Missionaries in Kenya, Fr. Bellagamba died of heart failure and bronchial infection.

Fr. Cellana described Fr. Bellagamba as a great personality in the Consolata congregation who started as a formator before rising to become a professor of theology, and later the Vice General Superior of the Consolata missionaries in Rome.

"He took the mission as something that was in his blood." Fr. Cellana said. +

Bishop Duffy, Outspoken Advocate for the Poor: Requiem in Pacem



Bishop Paul Francis Duffy, OMI – an outspoken Oblate missionary and Zambian bishop whose social justice work brought him threats from government officials – died Tuesday in San Antonio. Father Billy Morell, OMI said Bp. Duffy was known throughout Zambia for fearlessly advocating for **the rights and freedoms of people in the country's poorest areas.**

In his 27 years there, Bp. Duffy was credited with helping establish Oblate Radio Liseli, the Mongu Diocese Development Center, three schools, a teachers college, a hospital and several home-based care projects, including one for people with

HIV/AIDS.

"He was a major political voice for the poor in Zambia," said Father Jim Chambers in San Antonio. "He loved Zambia, and you could see that. He had a deep concern for the sufferings of the poor, and he let the government know.

Bishop Duffy will be buried in Mongu, Zambia. +

The USCMA would like to welcome our interns for the 2011 Academic School Year.

Amanda Ceraldi is a sophomore at Catholic University of America studying theology. She is excited to be a part of the USCMA team because she wants to explore more thoroughly the connection between mission and social justice. Amanda is originally from Baltimore, MD.



Patricia Silva is a sophomore at George Washington University. She is studying International Affairs. She is excited to look more closely at how to involve young adults in mission. Patty spent her summer in Guatemala working at domestic violence shelter and daycare center.

Patty is originally from Nahant, MA.

Please help us welcome these two women to the USCMA team! They will both be with us in Miami— Be sure to say hello!!+

Are you staying current with events and news of mission? Aside from the quarterly Mission Update, USCMA also publishes an monthly online **Mission E-Update.**

Mission E-Update

is an online, monthly newsletter published by the United States Catholic Mission Association. It aims to keep us updated on the who, what, when, and where of the mission world, and to strengthen our partnership in promoting mission and global solidarity.

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Do you have your own story of mission or mission event that you would like to see in **Mission E-Update**? Let us know at uscma@uscatholicmission.org

From the Board President: Continued from page 2

It was over 10 years ago that I went to my first mission conference/congress in Chicago. I was excited then, but never imagined what an impact the USCMA would come to have on our approach to mission and the energy it would give me for the journey here at home. As USCMA celebrates its 30th anniversary, here in Miami, it is fitting that we are also celebrating the re-opening of the mission office here in the Archdiocese of Miami. I am honored to have been asked by Archbishop Wenski to serve as its director, alongside the new Director of Propagation of the Faith, Fr. David Zirilli. These two celebrations are connected, because for many years the USCMA has been a source of energy and support for the missionary spirit that is alive and well here in Miami. In stepping out of the local view to see the wonder of our global church through all of you, we have deepened our understanding and identity as US Catholics in mission. In the very act of pushing out into the deep, we are opened to a new discipleship in the Lord that has forged new paths of hope even amidst the most difficult times.

Transition and change are necessary components of pushing out into the deep, for the deep is a new place that requires new skills and new relationships, and deepening of old relationships. But it is not without its challenges! While I am celebrating the new mission office in Miami, I am at the same time preparing to say goodbye to Fr. Michael Montoya, MJ who has brilliantly served the USCMA as our executive director for the last 6 years. Michael leaves USCMA in December 2011, which marks yet another transitional challenge. I confess I was in some denial about this for quite some time! It is difficult to say good bye to Michael. He has been a unique package of a multitude of gifts. He brought to USCMA the capacity to unite us and highlight the richness of our communion. **With Michael's leadership we made it through tough economic times, all the while continuing to evolve and we never lost the creativity that is characteristic of our union. It is hard to say goodbye, and yet he has appropriately set up this transition as yet another reflection for all of us in "Pushing Out Into the Deep." Michael will be missed! We know that he can't be replaced, but that we move forward with great hope and perseverance because of all he has done in his capacity.**

The waters await... disciples are gathering... let us join together as US Catholics in mission this October, in celebration and reflection of the promise of the deep.♦♦♦



Executive Director's Message: Continued from page 2

mission. Your own commitment to God's mission and of the thousands of missionaries we have in the field have truly inspired me in my own missionary journey. I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to have served as your Executive Director.

As we enter the Thanksgiving Season, I am one with St. Paul is saying, "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:3-6) ♦♦♦

Short Term Mission: Continued from page 3

on Saturday with life, mission and faith. Everything else just clicked into place.

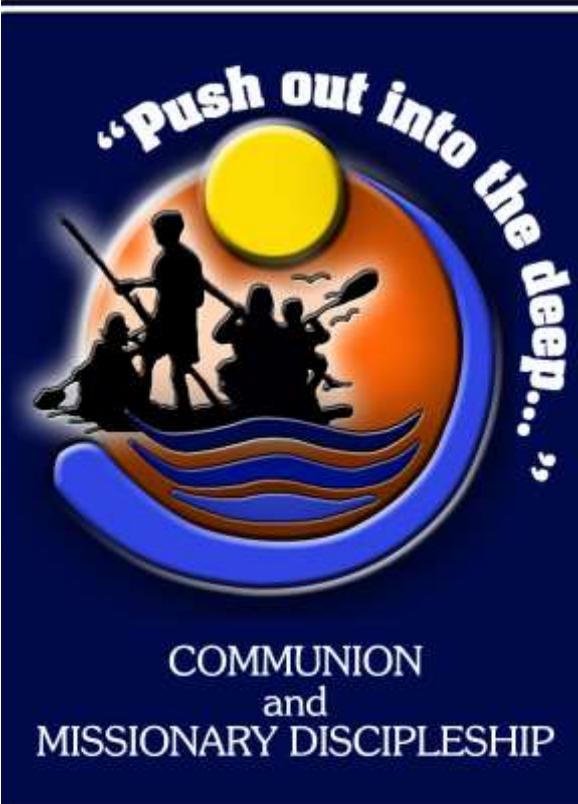
Surrender is a lesson I have been learning for some time, and sometimes I learn it better than others. I knew if I could make it through that week, well, I could stick out the next week! I threw my proverbial "watch" away. **I went with the flow-** so much so that I let the current just sweep me away! I paid more attention to the kids who would come up and wanted to play volleyball in the middle of the afternoon. We spent one afternoon painting faces, listening to music, reading *The Help* to each other, and playing with the neighborhood kids.

I think it's a typical reaction to walk away from an experience like this one and say, "I see Jesus in the poor. Jesus is more present here. The people have more faith because they have so little to get in their way. They are amazing!" I think that some of that is true, to an extent. It is a good place to start. Jesus is very real and very present in the barrio.

The challenge came for me in trying to remember that the people that I encountered are my sisters and brothers. Living as a family of four women/strangers/companions in tight quarters for extended periods of times is very challenging- how do I not fight? How do I remember to love? I think that is the bigger challenge. How do I recognize that the mother who is beating her child in the middle of the street is also my sister? How do I recognize that the child who brought a weapon with him to the bible camp is a brother? What about the little girl who hit me?

I cannot let my response be to love with pity- I am called to love all in their imperfections- just as they love me in mine. ♦♦♦

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Professor of Mission & Culture,
Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL
"Blessings and Challenges of Communion and Missionary Discipleship"

Sr. Madge Karecki, SSJ-TOSF, DTh
Director of the Office for Mission Education and Animation
Archdiocese of Chicago
"Let down the nets for a catch..."

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Sr. Madge Karecki, SSJ -TOSF—Mission Director, Archdiocese of Chicago

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"Maintenance and Mission" A Challenge for Religious Communities
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Creative responses to Today's Mission Realities

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Rev. Allan Figueroa Deck, SJ—USCCB Director, Cultural Diversity in the Church

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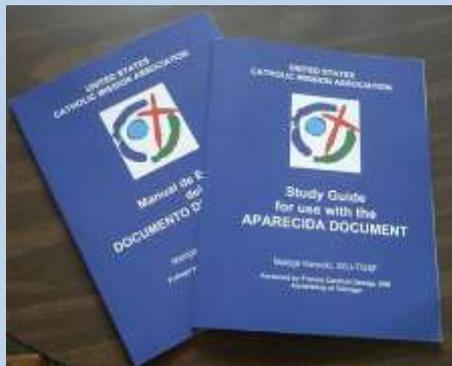
AIRPORT SHUTTLE

The hotel does not provide airport shuttle services. The members of the Mission Network of Miami have volunteered to be available for pick up. Please arrange at least 1 week in advance by calling Monica Lauzurique @ 305-762-1247.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call USCMA at 202-832-3112 or e-mail us at uscma@uscatholicmission.org or go to www.uscatholicmission.org

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individuals, groups, parishes, and dioceses in their mission promotion and education. In using this study guide, it is hoped that mission becomes integral in our response to our baptismal promise. Spanish translation is made by Fr. Ramon Caluza, President of Union Dominicana de Emisoras Catolicas and General Director of Radio Enriquillo, Dominican Republic.

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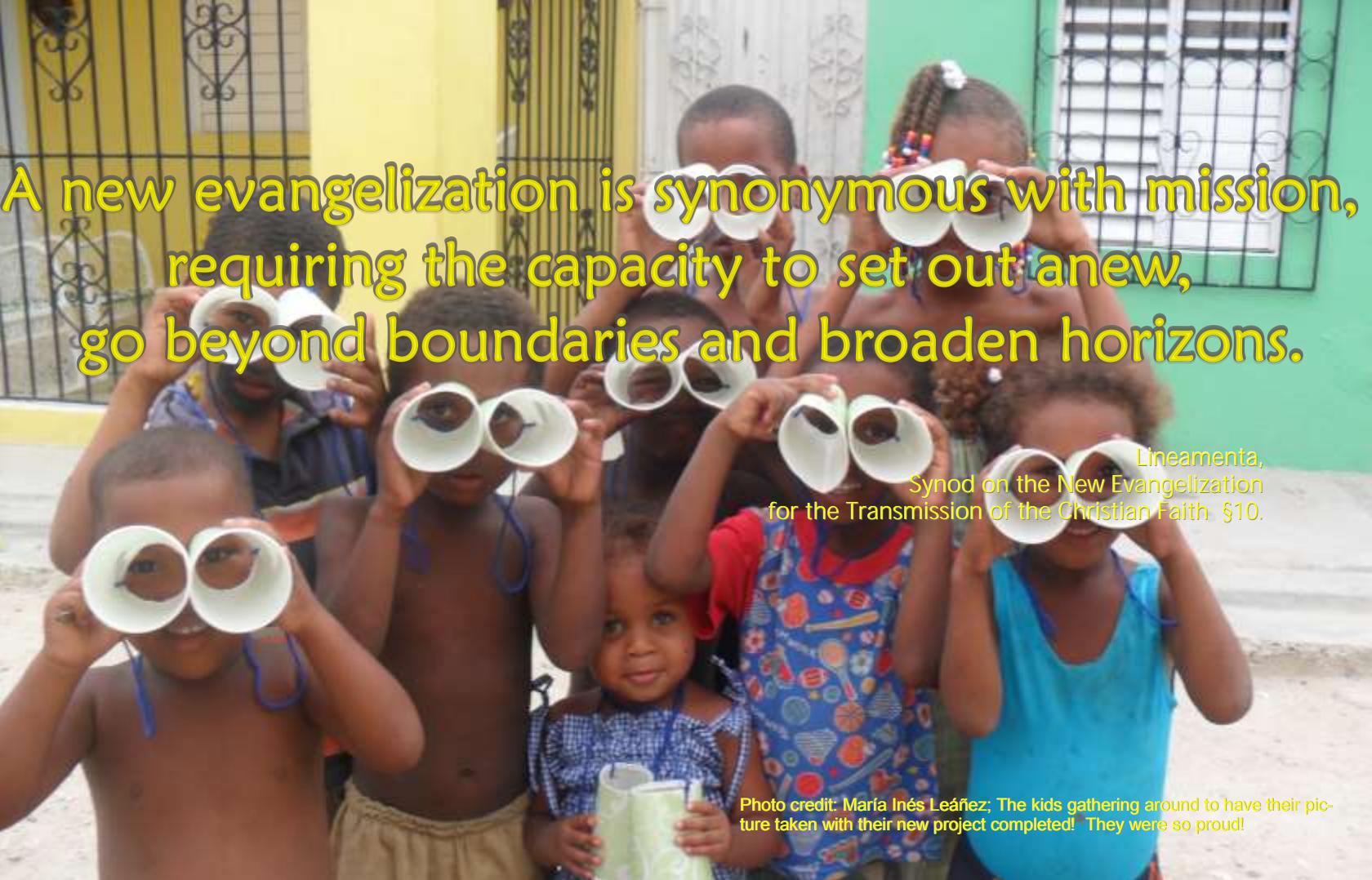
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Photo credit: María Inés Leáñez; The kids gathering around to have their picture taken with their new project completed! They were so proud!



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