

Mission TODAY

missio 

Autumn 2017



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Editorial Board:
Fr Anthony Chantry
Michelle Slater
Stephen Davies
Nicky Pisa

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Cover: Pope Francis thanks Red Box supporters, like you!

The National Director writes

In his World Mission Sunday message the Holy Father addresses all of us who are part of the Red Box family: 'You are a precious means of awakening in every Christian community a desire to reach beyond its own confines and security in order to proclaim the Gospel to all.'

Your generosity in praying for and sharing your gifts with the struggling and sometimes suffering Church across the world is truly making a difference. I have witnessed it myself on my recent visit to South Sudan, a country racked by violence, corruption and hatred. In this part of the world the Church is the only trustworthy organisation in the country, capable of delivering basic services and offering the means to peaceful co-existence.

Bishop Paride Taban's *Peace Village* is one of many beacons of hope inspired by the Gospel. In a remote place in South Sudan not far from the Ethiopian border, situated in the midst of warring ethnic groups, his





Peace Village is courageously striving to bring peace to people of goodwill. Read more about it on pages 6-9.

Our Summer Mission Masses offered another opportunity for us to awaken the desire to reach out to others, as we gave thanks to God and each other for the wonderful work of Local Secretaries, Promoters/Zealators and Red Box supporters. Thanks to all of you who were able to join us.

The fruit of the Mill Hill Missionaries' long and inspiring history in India is celebrated by Fr Fons in his article 'Inspiration in India', and Fr John, as always, gives us valuable food for thought as he considers Jesus' teaching on judging others.

I do not have to tell you how important World Mission Sunday is to our Church. Please do all you can in your parishes to encourage people to respond to the Holy Father's call to proclaim the Gospel in countries, such as South Sudan, where the Gospel of Jesus and your generosity, are changing lives for the better.

Fr Anthony Chantry

Fr Anthony Chantry, National Director

The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions



Join with the Holy Father in praying:

NOVEMBER

Christians in Asia

That Christians in Asia, bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed, may promote dialogue, peace, and mutual understanding, especially with those of other religions.

DECEMBER

The elderly

That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming new generations.

JANUARY

Religious minorities in Asia

That Christians, and other religious minorities in Asian countries, may be able to practise their faith in full freedom.

FEBRUARY

Say 'No' to corruption

That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist the lure of corruption.

Be a missionary through prayer

Whoever and wherever we are, we can all be missionary: joining together in prayer with the wider Church, volunteering for Missio or giving generously through the Red Box. These are all valuable ways to further the work of mission.

Missio around the world

EGYPT



'Path of the Holy Family'

UNESCO is preparing to recognise World Heritage Site status for the 'Path of the Holy Family', the journey travelled by Mary, Joseph and the Child Jesus when they found refuge in Egypt after escaping the violence of Herod. During his visit in April, Pope Francis made several references to the hospitality offered by Egypt to the Child Jesus, Joseph and Mary after being forced into exile.

It is believed that UNESCO's recognition will help increase the flow of pilgrims and will possibly compensate for the huge losses to the national tourist industry caused by terrorism and the instability in the region.

WALES AND ENGLAND

Good Shepherd services

On 23 May 2017, children from the Archdiocese of Cardiff, Wales, gathered at Cardiff Metropolitan Cathedral of St David to celebrate the work of Missio's children's branch, Mission Together. They were joined by Archbishop George Stack and Fr Anthony Chantry, the National Director of Missio England and Wales, at a Good Shepherd service.

While on 24 May 2017, children from the Archdiocese of Southwark gathered at Aylesford Priory in Kent and were joined by Bishop Paul Mason at their celebration. Not to be outdone, children in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton celebrated on 21 June 2017 in Worth Abbey with Bishop Richard Moth.



Beautiful singing, dancing and artwork were shared by hundreds of children, in addition to praying for one another and fundraising for children living in vulnerable communities overseas – *children helping children*.

MONGOLIA



Silver Jubilee celebration

On 9 July 2017 a special Mass was held in the capital city of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, to

celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Catholic Church's presence in Mongolia. Bishop Wenceslao Padilla, Apostolic Prefect of Mongolia, said: 'At this point, I can truly say, and I want to cry out to the world, the words of the prophet Isaiah: Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name, let his name be honoured, give word of his doings among the peoples, say that his name is lifted up (Isaiah 12:4). The God of our fathers has been truly rich in grace, loving, he protected and guided us in every step of our path of faith and our small community of believers in Mongolia.'

Bishop Padilla also emphasised that 'the Church's stability in Mongolia, with its presence in various sectors of society, has always grown and strengthened. The arrival of missionaries of different religious congregations and of different nations, collaboration and the faith of many Mongols contributed to building a solid presence of the Church in Mongolia.'

Congratulations Mongolia!

VATICAN CITY

Helping those in need of mercy

On June 3 2017 Pope Francis met with 120 National Directors from Missio (Pontifical Mission Societies). The Holy Father gave a heartfelt thanks to all of those who support the work of Missio throughout the world and encouraged us to 'live the mission as a permanent opportunity to announce Christ, meeting him and helping others to have a personal encounter with him too. I hope your material and spiritual assistance to churches around the world will make the churches more and more based on the Gospel and on the baptismal involvement of all the faithful, laypeople and clerics, in the Church's only mission: to make God's love known to everybody, especially to those most in need of his mercy.

'I bless you all in this day and ask the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles and Mother of the Church, always to inspire us with the testimony of her faith and the reassuring guarantee of her motherly intercession.'





Where there is hatred, sow love; help bring peace to South Sudan

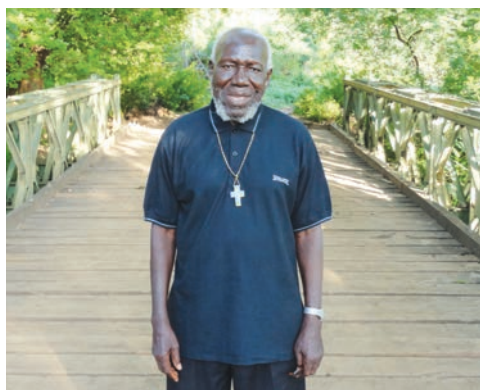
The conflict continues; more and more people are hungry, homeless and traumatised. Retribution is rife. South Sudan is on the brink of collapse, but Bishop Paride Taban is trying his utmost to bring peace to his people

With one hand holding God and with the other hand holding humanity' is how Bishop Paride Taban makes his vital contribution towards encouraging a peaceful South Sudan. This humble, gentle man was bishop throughout the civil war which gripped Sudan from 1983 to 2005. He worked with the people, supporting them practically and spiritually, he dialogued with members of all sides of the civil war and was instrumental in eventually helping instigate independence for South Sudan, which came into force when it became the world's youngest nation in 2011.

The people of South Sudan have lived with conflict for most of the last 40 years. The majority of people living in South Sudan do not recall a time without conflict, with 75% of the population below the age of 30. Despite eight years of peace, since late 2013, groups within South Sudan itself have been at war with one another. Many people have been displaced both internally, and externally; forced to seek refuge in church grounds, UN sites and neighbouring countries.

Sadly, in addition to the violence, now the threat of famine has become a reality and those that are 'safe' are starving.

Bishop Paride shared with us recently: 'All of the war has been waged because of lack of education. People are not educated and do not accept each other as brothers and sisters because of tribalism.'



Knowing this, Bishop Paride retired as diocesan bishop in an effort to encourage people to live as equals. He embarked upon creating a 'Peace Village' in Kuron, knowing that the different tribes in this area were clashing and had no access to education, healthcare or the Church.

Many people who live on the land have done so for centuries and have no experience of schools, clinics and the infrastructure that we take for granted. According to a local priest, this current conflict is worse than the previous civil wars. Tribes are turning on one another and they are using guns. People are not just stealing cattle, they are kidnapping children. Retribution is rife.

Last year, one of the mothers in the *Peace Village* felt her blood turn cold. June's five-year-old son, John, was gone – abducted by five people while tending to his family's cows.

His tiny legs could not outrun his captors.

Word quickly spread and families of the local community began to search desperately, but he was nowhere to be found. As there is no local law enforcement, the *Peace Village* includes a peace office so John's abduction was quickly reported to the office, which immediately circulated the information to the surrounding communities, including that of the rival tribe, the believed culprits.

The tribes still do not get on with one another, not least because of cattle raiding between them. Members of one tribe will often go armed at night and steal cattle from their rival tribe by force. Although this has been happening for centuries, what is new is that children are now being abducted too. Previously, a counter-attack would have taken place immediately, with the 'wronged' tribe seeking revenge, either by stealing cattle or one of the other tribes' children, if not something worse.

For five days, the community searched for John. Roadblocks were enforced and people across the area were on alert to look for the child. John's mother was heartbroken; she could not eat or sleep. At the time she said, 'By taking my child you have destroyed me.'

On the fifth day, a soldier who was travelling towards Kuron from an army camp almost 100 miles away was asked if he knew anything about John. He said that a child had been found by a group of patrolling soldiers who happened upon some 'wildlife people'. When they saw the soldiers they ran away, leaving the boy behind. John told the soldiers he was from Kuron and when asked who he knew there, he gave the name of 'Bishop'.

When the *Peace Village* found out that John was at the army camp, a village peace worker and John's father rushed to the army village. Arriving at the army camp, to prove they knew him, John was put with 15 other children and his father asked which child was his son. He broke down in tears as soon he saw John and ran and embraced him.



John's mother says, 'Without the *Peace Village*, our child would just have disappeared. Although I am filled with anger for the people who did this to my child, I know that we must learn to live alongside the communities around us. The *Peace Village* is helping us to do that. I don't want anyone else's child to be taken. No one deserves that.'

The local chief in Kuron says, 'Thanks to the *Peace Village*, we now know that we need to establish the facts first and find out what has happened, rather than jump to conclusions.'

God has given Bishop Paride a call to establish the Peace Village.

Now he is a beacon and an example to all other people in South Sudan to make similar communities. Bishop Paride has a great love in his heart and shares God's love with us all.'

The *Peace Village* continues to work with all the local tribes. Workshops help bring together people from each of the tribes to enable them to get to know one another and to try to understand one another. They also have a monitoring team to find out what is happening in the area and ensure they have the facts, not hearsay, about issues in the communities.



The *Peace Village* reaches and supports those in greatest need through trauma counselling, a health clinic, a nursery and primary school and a vocational training centre.

Bishop Paride tells us: 'Now this village is used as a model, but we need funds to create a *Peace Academy*, so that we can roll out this model across the country.'

The concept of the *Peace Academy* is that when people attend, they are personally transformed through Gospel teachings and are then encouraged to reflect how and what they may do in their own community to help build peace. At Kuron it is very much the local Church leading the way. You too can help to build the kingdom of God here and now, whilst maintaining hope for the future.

With your help, Missio, the Pope's official charity for overseas mission, works to answer the call to love God and to love our neighbour by bringing the hope of the Gospel where there is turmoil, poverty and uncertainty in the world.



On *World Mission Sunday* on 22 October this year, Missio will be encouraging the faithful of England and Wales to 'help bring peace to South Sudan' and throughout the world through your prayers and financial support. The Pope's worldwide collection is a real sign of God's mercy and love to our sisters and brothers around the world who are suffering through war and conflict.

Where there is hatred, sow love
Help bring peace to South Sudan
 Find out how you can help by
 visiting missio.org.uk/wms2017

Summer Masses



Across England and Wales during June and July many of you came together to celebrate, give thanks and pray for the work of missionaries around the world. From Gateshead to Newport, Salford to Plymouth, Local Secretaries, Promoters, missionaries and Red Box holders gathered to celebrate Mass together

Each Mass was concelebrated by Fr Anthony Chantry, Missio's National Director, along with local Mill Hill organisers and a member of the Mill Hill Missionaries' General Council. The representative on the Council for Africa, Fr Andrew Mukulu MHM, shared in his homily how the Catholic faith was brought by the Mill Hill Missionaries to the area of Uganda where he was born. Now he is himself a Mill Hill Missionary, having worked in Cameroon, South Africa and now representing the Africa Mission on the International Council.

Over refreshments after each Mass there was the chance to catch up with friends, hear updates about Mill Hill Missionaries people have known, as well as hear a little about what your support through the Red Box is achieving around the world.

Look out for dates of next year's Masses in the *Mission Today* Calendar 2018 or at missio.org.uk and join us at a Mission Mass in 2018!



Thank you for sharing God's love

Earlier this year, we asked on Facebook if people have a Red Box at home. It was a way of reaching out to people who may not always get a copy of *Mission Today*, or who have a Red Box which hasn't been emptied for a while.

Tens of thousands of people saw the post and hundreds of people 'liked' it. Some people even took the trouble to write a little message about the special place the Red Box has in their homes.

In July, Pope Francis reminded us that we're all called to be missionaries. Through our prayerful and financial support of the Red Box, we are living out that call. Thank you!



'My Mam had a Red Box when I was a child, as did most of our parish. One of the men I collect from still has his mother's original wooden box and he continues to save in his mother's memory. I find this very humbling.'

Isobel from Consett, Co. Durham



'I am our Local Secretary. We have had the Red Boxes for as long as I can remember (72 years) and we're just completing our Spring collection.'

Eileen from Rotherham



'We inherited our Red Box from Mrs Townsley who said, "As long as you have a Mission Box you will never be short of money!"'

Sandra from East Sussex

'I started with the Red Box scheme when I was 14, emptying them for our parish. Now 50 years later I am our Local Secretary and still emptying them. I have got to know some lovely and generous people through this good cause.'

Joan from Willington, Co. Durham



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facebook.com/MillHillMissionaries



Join us on Twitter: twitter.com/MissioUK

An enduring legacy of love, faith and hope for the future

'Works of love directed to one's neighbour are the most perfect external manifestation of the interior grace of the Spirit.'

Pope Francis



You can build the Church and empower local people to form and sustain communities of faith; train future priests, sisters and catechists; support vulnerable children via educational, medical, welfare and formation initiatives; and educate the faithful about mission, through a legacy to Missio.

After your pilgrimage on earth has ended, your legacy can live on to bear witness to Christ's love for all our brothers and sisters in need. Your gift will mean that future generations will be given the chance to experience the fullness of life and the hope that comes from knowing God's love for them.

After your loved ones have been taken care of, what will your legacy be?

Your gift goes a long way in the mission dioceses overseas. Our work directly through the local bishops ensures that funds are distributed efficiently and where there is greatest need. Please remember Missio and/or the Mill Hill Missionaries in your Will.

If you would like more information on how to leave a gift to Missio and/or the Mill Hill Missionaries in your Will, please visit missio.org.uk/legacies or contact Monica at legacy@missio.org.uk or on 020 7821 9755.



Leave a legacy of faith

Care for the future of our Church

Please help us show the love of Jesus to the children of our world.

Special gifts left to us in our supporters' Wills help us reach out with God's compassion and light to some of the most desolate and desperate parts of our world.

Where there is turmoil, poverty and uncertainty, where the Church is new, young or poor, there you will find the APF and our Mill Hill Missionaries.

By providing the building blocks of our churches, schools, orphanages and clinics, we ensure that your gift will live on year after year in places like these, in generations yet to come and in children

who, thanks to your love, will receive the gift of faith and hope.

Making a gift to Missio and/or Mill Hill in your Will means that you will be leaving a foundation of faith for the future. A wonderful gift of faith that lasts forever.

Leave a legacy of love

The next step is to send for our information brochure. We will send you this in confidence and without any obligation on your part. If you would prefer to speak to someone, please call Monica at Missio's National Office on 020 7821 9755. Alternatively you can email the National Director, Fr Anthony Chantry at: director@missio.org.uk

Help bring faith and hope to where they are most needed

We need your help to reach out to all people, offering the dignity and hope that comes through knowing Jesus.

Your prayers and generosity make possible the essential and life-giving mission of the Church in our world: fighting poverty, injustice and exploitation.

Red Box holders and annual members are part of the APF world family. You play a vital role in the mission of the Church, bringing God's love and renewed hope to the poorest and most in need.

To offer your support please complete the form on the right.

You can also call 020 7821 9755 or visit missio.org.uk



Could you be a missionary priest or brother?

Have you ever considered joining the 150 young men training to be missionaries at Mill Hill's international training centres?

If you are a Catholic, male, single and aged between 18 and 30 you could join them.

To find out more, with no obligation, please contact Fr Dermot Byrne by email: millhillvocationsoffice@gmail.com or by telephone on 0161 737 9742

Please fill in the form below and return to:

National Director, Missio, 23 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1NU

Your details (PLEASE PRINT)

***Required fields**

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First Name* _____ Surname* _____

Address* _____

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Please send me the quarterly Missio **e-newsletter** (provide email address above)

I want Missio to claim Gift Aid on this and any future donations until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I will notify Missio if I want to cancel this declaration, change my name or home address, or no longer pay sufficient tax on my Income and/or Capital Gains Tax.

Date _____ **N.B. Please ensure the box is ticked.**

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I enclose a donation of £ _____ *(please make cheques/postal orders payable to APF-Mill Hill)*. You can also give online at **missio.org.uk** or call us on 020 7821 9755 *(office hours)* or via credit card/direct debit – see over

I would like to make an **annual gift**, offering £30 or more a year

I will collect a Red Box from my parish Local Secretary or Parish Priest *(money from Red Boxes is collected by volunteers in your parish)*

I would like to become a **volunteer for the APF** in my parish

Please tick if you require a receipt

Please send me information on how to leave a **gift in my Will**

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I would like _____ *(please state number)* **Mass/es** offered for the following intentions (please use a separate sheet if necessary):

Intentions:

I enclose £ _____ *(the usual offering is £5 or more per Mass; please make cheques payable to Missio Mass a/c or see over to pay by card)*

Please tick if you require a receipt



To donate via card

Please ensure you have filled in the front of this form first!

Your details (PLEASE PRINT)

*Required fields

I would like to pay £ _____ by:

Visa/Mastercard Maestro/Delta/Visa CAF Charity Card

Name on card (PLEASE PRINT)* _____

Card No* _____

Issue No _____ Start date _____

Expiry date* _____ Security code* _____ Last three numbers on the signature strip on the back of your card

Please tick if you require a receipt

To donate via Direct Debit

I wish to pay Missio the sum of (Please tick):

£30 £50 £100 Other £ _____

Monthly Quarterly Annually on the:

5th 15th 28th day of the month



Instruction to your bank or building society to pay Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form using a ballpoint pen and send to:
Missio, 23 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1NU

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To: The Manager _____ Bank/building society _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Service user number

2 5 4 5 8 8

Reference (for office use)

Bank/building society account number _____

Branch sort code _____

Name of account holder(s) _____

Instruction to your Bank/building society: Please pay Missio Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Missio and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature of account holder _____

Date _____

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.



Invest in the future of our Church – help train a future priest

Your help is vital to the work of Missio's Society of St Peter the Apostle (SPA), which is mandated by Pope Francis to support all seminarians in mission dioceses around the world



The Church is most active and growing in mission dioceses, including Sri Lanka, where there are many faithful young men who feel the call to the priesthood. One such man was Prasad, who attended the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka. He was a student who had a great vision for his life as a priest, telling us he wanted to 'reach out to the community and let them feel Christ's presence in their lives.'

In 2016, Fr Prasad was ordained a priest and is currently engaged in youth ministry in the Diocese of Galle, which faces the Indian Ocean in the south of Sri Lanka. This community hides its heartache well as in addition to the civil war, it was devastated by the tsunami in 2004.

While infrastructure is being rebuilt, the deeper wounds of loss and sorrow will take much longer to heal. The presence of a priest is crucial in supporting those in distress.

With your prayers and financial assistance, the SPA continues its vital work supporting seminaries worldwide to ensure that Catholics everywhere can share their faith.

If you would like more information on how to support the future of our Church, please visit missio.org.uk/spa or contact Suzy at spa@missio.org.uk or on 020 7821 9755.

Inspiration in India

Mill Hill Missionaries go where the need is greatest, 'to love and to serve'. Here Fr Fons Eppink MHM shares his experience of visiting Fr Frans Baartmans MHM in India



I met Fr Frans Baartmans MHM in 2013 at the Ashray Social and Health Centre he founded in Nagwa, Varanasi. Wearing the traditional Indian dress and walking in sandals he blended effortlessly into the local scene. His bald head framed on each side by long grey locks gave him the appearance of a Hindu sadhu or holy man.

I get a first glimpse of the Nagwa slum where he lives and the little brick houses he has built for the Dalits, literally the 'downtrodden'. His own small two-room dwelling is little more than a hovel. He sleeps on a mat on the floor. His level of detachment and the freedom it brings is quite amazing.



Frans came to Varanasi, 'the city of a thousand Hindu temples', in 1977 just when India shut its doors to foreign missionaries. Mill Hill was going to withdraw but Frans persuaded his superiors to be allowed to go to Varanasi. His argument was: 'This is not a time to withdraw. Vatican II promotes dialogue. We need more contact.'

I want to really enter into the depth of the Indian experience.

And that is what he did. Frans went to live among the Dalits in Nagwa.

'My approach is the Gospel. I try to live and practise what is at the heart of the Christian message. For me that is the story of the "Good Samaritan". I try to live that.' His is an apostolate of compassionate presence in an overwhelmingly Hindu environment.

At the Ashray Centre, Frans and his assistants oversee a diversified programme uplifting the standard of living of the Dalits. The dispensary provides basic medical care. There is rampant tuberculosis at Nagwa and many people

suffer from eye diseases. The Centre has acquired a small ambulance to transport serious cases or pregnant women to hospital. This saves them the indignity of having to be taken on a bicycle or a rickshaw.

To help improve the diet of the slum-dwellers Frans has set up a cooperative garden on two large plots.

Acquiring the land was an uphill struggle. No one wanted to sell when they found out that he represented non-caste people and they certainly did not want Dalits as neighbours! Eventually Frans got the first piece of land and started by having a borehole sunk for irrigation. Now, tenants grow their own vegetables, mostly for family consumption.

Coming out of the relative safety of their neighbourhood to go to the gardens was a real act of liberation for the Dalit inhabitants of Nagwa. In the beginning there was much opposition from neighbours. Some carelessly dumped refuse and human waste on the plot showing their contempt of the Dalits. This continued for a while until the Dalits

finally had had enough and asked Frans to go to the police. With a policeman keeping a watchful eye from a distance they took bags of assorted waste in procession to the house of the main offender, called him out, and then unceremoniously dumped the bags in the corridor of his house. Since then they have been left in peace!

It hardly needs saying that education is another key area of empowerment. A primary school for Dalit children has found a home on the roof of the Ashray Centre.

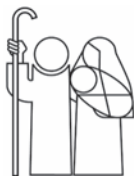
There are 75 children at the school and while more children need an education, there is no room for more.

Fr Frans has a loving eye and wholehearted attention for the marginalised and will patiently listen to anyone who appeals for his attention or help. He tells me how one particular day at least fifteen people stopped him to ask if he had work for them. He always stops, gets off his bike, and listens.

I am deeply moved by the quiet simplicity of his simple life and by his deeply held faith in the heart of this Hindu holy city.



Fr Michael Corcoran MHM, General Superior of St Joseph's Missionary Society, reports on the latest news from Mill Hill Missionaries sharing the Good News around the world



A valuable contribution



Br Huub Welters MHM

Br Huub Welters MHM is an eminent representative of a rapidly shrinking breed – the Mill Hill Missionary Brothers. Mostly operating in the background, away from the limelight, Missionary Brothers continue to make their own valuable contribution to the work of evangelisation.

Theirs is a lifelong missionary commitment. In some quarters there is a renewed awareness and acknowledgement of the value of such long-term missionary involvement in an age of predominantly short-term volunteering.

Br Huub Welters perfectly fits this characterisation. In the span of more than 50 years of loving service he has put his considerable talents at the service of the local Church in English-speaking Cameroon. Architect, builder, fundraiser, accountant, administrator, legal advisor, pastoral worker, teacher – the list of his varied involvements is extensive and we are grateful for every single one of them!

Smelling of the sheep

'You must meet the students to listen to their experience of pastoral work. Pay attention to their body language. You'll come away inspired', Sr Colette McCann MSHR told Fr Fons Eppink MHM when he visited the Mill Hill Missionary Formation House in Bamenda, in the north-west province of Cameroon.

A total of 37 students are enrolled there in a formation programme of one year of basic formation and three years of philosophy. The initiation into pastoral experience is an essential component of the integrated formation programme. Students take a month's pastoral placement during their long holidays. They also visit local parishes for various duties during weekends.

For most, the pastoral placement means stepping right out of their comfort zone. Cameroon's north-west province is a multi-coloured quilt of widely differing tribes and assorted languages, cultures and types of food.



Mill Hill students in Cameroon



Mill Hill Missionaries with newly appointed Archbishop Simon Poh, Malaysia

Outreach in Asia

One is always aware of the divide between west Malaysia and east Malaysia (Sarawak) where our Mill Hill Missionaries are based. There is a constant drive by the authorities of west Malaysia to Islamise the state of Sarawak.

Our missionaries working in rural settings have a pastoral outreach to the longhouses of the tribal Iban people. A longhouse can have over fifty families living together under one roof in adjoining rooms. Visiting the people often involves journeying upriver by boat for hours and even sleeping overnight on the banks of the river.

Vocations in the dioceses of Sibiu and Miri where we work are at an all-time low and as such the presence of our Mill Hill Missionaries is much appreciated. Our missionaries have mastered the local Iban language and they also reach out to the strong Chinese community in learning the Mandarin language.

The mission continues with a new generation of Mill Hill Missionaries from Africa and Asia.

We can all be missionary

Very often when we think of 'mission' or 'the missions', our minds turn to Africa, Asia and Latin America. As missionaries, whether abroad or at home, the issues and challenges of our times are ever present. Each one of us can articulate the hopes and dreams, the challenges and sufferings, which mark the lives of the peoples we encounter in our ministry. There are people who need our help, who are crying out to be heard and who are supremely worthy of our every effort especially on behalf of justice, peace and solidarity.

Visiting our missionaries in the Tyrol, Austria, gave me a sense of the missionary work we continue to do locally in embracing the reality of human life. Though many of our missionaries in Europe are now in retirement, they continue to find new opportunities to serve others.



Fr Gustl Frenadamez MHM spent over fifty years as a missionary in the Philippines. Here he is standing in front of a picture of his cousin, St Joseph Freinademetz SVD, a missionary who died in China



Do Not Judge

For many years my father kept an allotment. I remember him showing me some lettuces which had 'bolted'. If you leave a lettuce too long in the ground it grows a rather ugly spike of a flower which takes all the goodness out of the plant. Many of the things which challenge us Christians in the modern world are in fact Christian ideas or Christian virtues which have 'bolted'

The Bible is full of criticism of religion. Obviously it criticises idolatry, but the prophets are often fiercely critical of the religion of Israel and the way it is practised. Jesus, a devout observant Jew, was similarly very critical of the way some pious fellow Jews practised their faith.

St Paul is very critical of the way some early Christians practised their faith, as is St John in the Apocalypse. None of these people were in any way anti-religion or anti-God, but they were against all falsehood, even when it appeared under the guise of true religion.

In the modern Western world that critique of religion has mutated into godless secularism which hates all religion and hates God. It is as though that biblical

critique, legitimate and necessary to keep our feet on the ground, 'bolted' and became something destructive and useless. We could say the same about other things such as secular humanism, materialism and even relativism. They are all Christian ideas that have gone wrong in the minds of people.

One of the commonest ideas which comes from the Bible but which somehow has morphed into something unhealthy is this saying of Jesus':

'Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned' Luke 6:37

Remember Jesus is living in a world where some people almost make a living out of condemning others. And he is saying 'Do not do that! Do not make that assumption and maybe you should take the plank out of your own eye before you take the splinter out of someone else's.' That is as true and valid today as it was then. But many modern people do not just mean that. For many people just saying to someone: 'What you are doing is wrong' is being judgemental and is wrong in itself.

But let me say very clearly that is not at all what Jesus meant. The Bible makes it very clear that there are times when we must say something. But what we condemn is actions, not persons.

Elsewhere Jesus says:

'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves.' Matthew 18:15

Many people today would say: 'If your brother does something wrong, then turn a blind eye and keep quiet because you must avoid being judgemental at all costs.'

Despite the fact that Scripture consistently directs us to correct the sinner, many

people have bought into the notion that correcting the sinner or denouncing some evil is 'judging' them. And when people buy this notion, this Christian virtue which has bolted, the Devil must be rubbing his hands in glee. If he can keep us from correcting one another, from calling one another to virtue, sin can and does flourish.

It is often very hard to correct someone or to point out their faults and I would usually prefer to keep quiet, keep the peace, not rock the boat. But sometimes you have to say something and that is what Jesus is pointing at. Several times, I have had friends, good people who were nevertheless doing things that were very wrong.

And I would much prefer to have kept quiet but I knew as a friend, and all the more as a priest, I had to say something.

I was afraid that I was putting the friendship at risk, but thank God each time the friend took it in the spirit that it was intended.

Jesus did not judge people. Especially those who were judged and condemned by society as a whole, they found a welcome and a safe place in his heart. But Jesus was nothing like the modern understanding of 'non-judgemental'.

In the Sermon on the Mount he roundly condemns all sorts of actions and attitudes. So it is not just murder that is wrong, but the sort of brooding anger that makes us write people off. Not only is adultery wrong, but also the lustful thoughts that might lead to it. Jesus does make it clear that there are limits and that not all actions are fine and dandy.

Fr John Hemer MHM, lecturer in Sacred Scripture, Allen Hall, London

Dear Editor

Earlier this year Mary Dearden received a papal award for her commitment and long service to the Church in Shrewsbury Diocese. A primary school teacher by training, when Mary 'retired' she began a second career of voluntary work. As well as being an active member of the Union of Catholic Mothers, Mary uses her musical gifts to play and sing at her local church. Together with husband Paul, she is a regular visitor at the local hospital, where, as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, they bring Communion to patients on the chemotherapy ward.

I am especially grateful to Mary for her work with Mission Together, Missio's children's branch. Since 2009 Mary has been travelling across the diocese to deliver assemblies to primary aged children and to encourage them to be '*children helping children*' through their prayers and fundraising.

Inspired by Mary's warmth, enthusiasm and commitment, pupils in Shrewsbury schools have said more than ten million Mission Together Prayers and have raised over £90,000 in the last eight years.

Many congratulations to Mary, and a big thank you to Paul, who gives so much of his time and service to support Mary in her work for Mission Together.

Fr Tony Grace
Missio Diocesan Director, Shrewsbury

Editor: Congratulations Mary on your amazing efforts!

Please do write to us:
The Editor, Mission Today,
23 Eccleston Square, London
SW1V 1NU

Close encounters of the feathered kind

I saw her ahead of me just in time. The mother bird was sedately walking across the Kenyan road with her chicks behind her. I screeched my car to a halt, but not before the bird, sensing danger, had placed herself in front of her chicks and spread out her beautiful wings as protection for them. Maybe it was all pure instinct but, nevertheless, she was prepared to give her life for her chicks. Surely there was something of God in that mother bird – something of God in her selflessness and her unconditional 'love'. All living creatures can show us the face of God in their actions and behaviour. Indeed all living creatures share in the Spirit of God and in the oneness of life. They share in the glorious mystery of God's evolving and grace-filled creation. In Genesis, after the Flood, God made a new covenant with all living creatures, not just humans, and Jesus refers to the birds of the air being fed and watched over by the Father. When we abuse living creatures we are abusing the face of God. I saw that face in the noble bird which I almost killed.

Father Peter

You can write to Fr Peter at:
41 Victoria Road, Formby,
Liverpool L37 1LW

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Annual Novena to St Joseph

10–18 March 2018

St Joseph's Missionary Society (Mill Hill Missionaries) is Britain's own missionary society, which was founded by Cardinal Herbert Vaughan in 1866.

Each year the Mill Hill community prepares for the feast day of St Joseph, our patron, with a special Novena of Masses and prayers. We pray for the intentions of all those who support our work, and for all of those who have asked for their personal intentions to be remembered in the novena. Prayer is the foundation of all mission work, both in this country and abroad.

The Novena is a positive way for APF-Mill Hill members to pray for each other and build links of prayer across the world for missionaries and the people they serve.

Please join us in person, if you can, at the daily Masses in Maidenhead, Berkshire and Freshfield, Liverpool.

Visit millhillmissionaries.com for more details

Take part at home

You can also join us in your own home by praying the daily Novena Prayer and/or by sending your petitions to us. All you need to do is complete the form inside the Spring 2018 issue of *Mission Today* and return it to: Novena Director, 58 Cookham Rd, Maidenhead SL6 7HT or email: novena@millhillmissionaries.com



Mission TODAY

Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF)

Missio, 23 Eccleston Square,
London SW1V 1NU
Reg. Charity No. 1056651

Tel: **020 7821 9755**

(Office hours only)

Email: apf@missio.org.uk

Web: missio.org.uk

Mill Hill Missionaries (MHM)

APF-Mill Hill, PO Box 163,
Liverpool L37 1WW
Reg. Charity No. 220690

Tel: **01704 875048**

(Office hours only)

Email: apfmillhill@tiscali.co.uk

Web: millhillmissionaries.com



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