

# Partnering with SSM

2017 Newsletter

***The Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother share hope through teaching, helping and healing. We are skilled teachers, compassionate caregivers, attentive counselors, caring friends and gentle companions to those in need—the sick, the poor, the old, the young and those in crisis. Through prayer and work, we bring fuller life to others.***

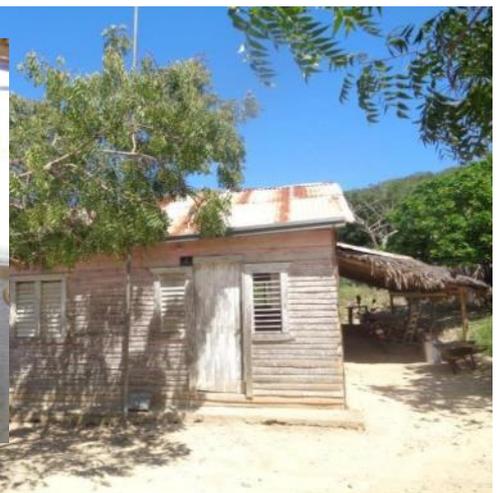
## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

We here in the Dominican Republic are very grateful for the donations you have sent to help our people, for they are more impoverished than ever because of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

Currently we are helping to rebuild some of our preschool centers, preschool teachers' homes and health program facilitators' homes. We are also giving some assistance to our fieldwork areas where they have been living in extreme poverty. Materials have been delivered to the most urgent areas; we are evaluating the needs of others, and working especially with our preschools, so that the children can continue their school work.

May God continue to bless you, our donors, for your interest in helping us free our people from the destruction caused by our recent natural disasters, which have been so unpredictable and devastating. They almost always affect our people who are most vulnerable and already deprived of so many basic needs. Receive our prayers, gratitude, and affection.

—Submitted by Sr. Arabia Jaramillo



Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother

## CARIBBEAN



**St. Lucia:** On the 29th of April, the Sisters from the Franciscan Institute and the Pierrot Youth Group participated in a “Vocation Walk” called “Walkers for Workers in His Vineyard.” It was a good turnout for young men and women, supported by family members, married couples, single young women and our parish priest, Fr. Kevin Murray, CSSR. During the walk there were various readings. On the arrival at the parish church, Fr. Albert Smith Master spoke on Vocation Discernment, Sr. Cecile St. Remy shared her vocation story, and Priscilla Burt, an SSM Associate, shared her story as a Christian single woman.

—Submitted by Sr. Michael Lewis



**Grenada:** Gratitude fills our hearts as we complete the improvements to our retreat center. Those improvements include updates to the physical structure and environment, such as landscaping, face-lifts to the bedrooms, new windows in the St. Dominic wing and expansion of our gardens. We also have opened a thrift shop to help support our mission. Our roof replacement project is still pending. Our retreat center is the only one of its kind on the island. We have hosted both Catholic and non-Catholic groups.



Mount St. Ervans Community facilitated retreats for St. David’s Secondary School, using the themes “I Am Worthy” and “The Importance of Prayer.” Other retreats included the Neocatechumenal Way Convivence, St. Joseph’s



Convent Lenten Day of Retreat, and St. Rose Modern Secondary School. In July, we hosted Youth Leadership Training. Groups also rented out our space for their own programs.



**Trinidad & Tobago:** In Trinidad and Tobago, our nonviolence and anti human trafficking workshops are continuing at the following Catholic secondary schools: St. Mary’s College, Fatima College, Holy Name Convent, and Providence Catholic Girls School. From September 2016 to February 2017 we have served 1,196 students ages 11-19.

—Submitted by Sr. Gillian Jerome

# TANZANIA

Our “Tau Center” is an initiative that was unveiled three years ago, although we have been working on the concept since opening our Ifunde Mission twelve years ago. We meet with the leaders of Catholic students in our Diocese from about 90 schools within a 100-kilometer radius. Together we develop themes such as human and spiritual growth, health education, physical and intellectual development, catechesis, and vocational topics. We would like to expand our library as a support system for our students who are studying for exams; 90% of our students in rural areas still can't pass the state exams. Lack of self esteem then leads to increasing violence and sexual exploitation. Gasoline expenses and car maintenance are also issues in getting students to our Center.



Over a number of years, we have held Youth Ministry meetings in small groups, and then sent them out to teach other youth to evangelize and spread practical living skills back in their small villages.

Our newest ministry is located in Usagara, on the outside of Mwanza; the construction should be completed within the year. To get to know the people and their needs, we started out with projects for the women and young children. Women in Africa are at the heart of their family both for the civic and church communities. Our journey with them includes basic evangelization and Christian formation as we grow together in faith. Besides spiritual growth, we focus on hygiene, health education, disease prevention, and first aid in case of accidents.



Another area we are focusing on is after-school care where children and teens can be helped in their studies, enabling them to advance to the next level of education. It is also an opportunity to grow together as part of a parish community; then they are less likely to be taken advantage of.

We are grateful for our many donors and the self-sacrifice of our Sisters and volunteers. Although we have made great progress, there is still much to be done. We are limited by personnel and monetary help.

—Submitted by Sr. Alessandra Maria Zonato



## BRAZIL



Another year has passed, and the Dom Bosco/Billy Gancho School continues its efforts to integrate students and families, providing an education based on Christian values and a greater sense of interdependence on community. At the school, we have weekly communal Liturgy together, gathered as people loved and beloved of God.

Let me share with you some of our activities and projects. Project Brotherhood's goal is to provide better living conditions for children, adolescents, and adults in Nova Xavatina, where situations of violence, drugs and prostitution exist. Each Saturday, some of the Sisters and



lay volunteers go there to provide educational and recreational activities, helping them to interact with and respect each other. We also focus on the basics of hygiene, disease prevention, nutrition, and cultural pride.

Lay volunteers support other projects as well. Once a month, we hold a bazaar where the poor can buy used clothing and footwear. In July, we held a Franciscan March to provide our youth with experiences of listening, prayer and reflection, confession, and spiritual direction. Through this event we realized how eager young people are for God, Scripture, and other forms of evangelization. Every month we also open our convent to Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and pray for vocations to SSM.



During March, we held a family event in Goiânia at one of our benefactor's. It included an evening of prayer and reflection. By engaging families in recreational and educational activities, we were able to help them strengthen the bonds between children, adolescents and parents, leaving a noticeable impact on their lives.



At Carnival time, we gather the youth from many parishes at our convent in Goiânia and surrounding cities to experience the beauty of God's love and mercy. We work closely with St. Benedict Parish in providing help to the elderly at the Good Shepherd Home and at the daycare facility. We also visit needy families and patients, evangelizing where we can.

—Submitted by Sr. Lucilda Cantuaria



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