

# Mission Connections

Volume #65

Spring, 2021



## ***Prayer from St. Francis of Assisi***

*You are beauty, you are gentleness.  
You are our protector, our guardian and defender.  
You are courage, you are our haven and our hope.  
You are our faith, our great consolation.  
You are our eternal life, great and wonderful Lord,  
God almighty, merciful Savior.*

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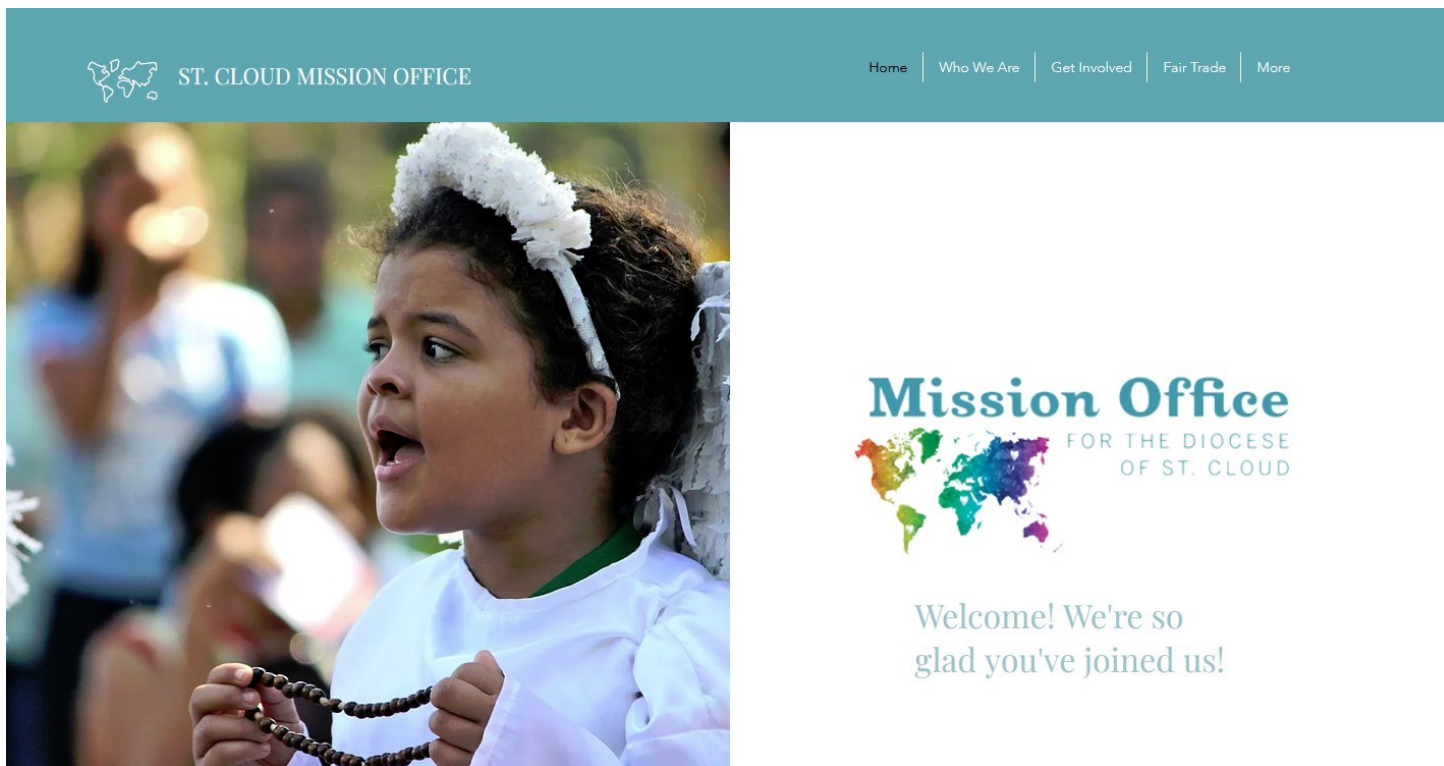
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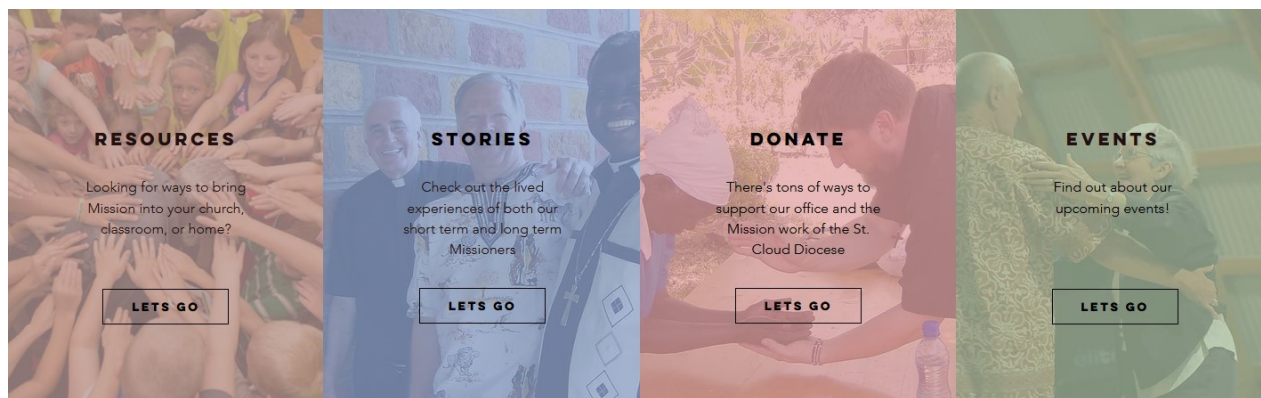
From Whom and Where in the World do our stories come from?

# A New Website for the Mission Office



Our new website is live! Since the start of the year, we have been working on getting a new website up and running for the Mission Office. While it has certainly been a learning curve and there have been some bumps along the way, we've put out something that we're proud of, and we're very excited to show it to everyone! If it seems like some things might be missing, *they probably are*. We published it while it is still a work in progress, so some pages, resources, and information are coming soon! We would love to hear from you what you think about it! If you have any suggestions for how we could make it better, we are always looking to improve! The pictures here are screenshots of the website to give you an idea of what it looks like!

Visit the website at: [www.stcloudmissionoffice.com](http://www.stcloudmissionoffice.com)



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Donations for any of the missionaries or mission connections mentioned here may be made in care of the Mission Office.

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# New School in the Congo

*This article was written by Fr. Kambale Sambya Zawadi Jean-Marie, OSC. He currently lives and works with the Crosiers in Onamia, MN and is the Director of Development there. He was born and raised in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. \*Pictures provided by Fr. Zawadi\**

The new hope for the children of Butembo, in North Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is shining on their faces because of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers who are strongly promoting education in Africa. The families that are living around our priory in Butembo have told the Crosiers of the need of building a K-12 Catholic School for their children. Not just any school, but a great school that will empower boys and girls to promote the culture of peace, reconciliation and justice as the State of North-Kivu emerges from decades of war and conflict. At our new school, our goal is also to promote women's leadership and dignity.

While I was there for vacation last year 2020, I could witness people saying: "Our children will no more have to walk so far away to seek an education. They will just go to school without thinking about transportation issues, for there are no school buses for children in Butembo. They walk a long distance everyday to go to school and during the rainy season children get wet, get sick and end up not going to school. This situation has to be changed.

The people of Butembo are grateful to God for the presence of the Crosiers and their benefactors who are supporting our project of building a K-12 Catholic School. This school will accommodate 1,600 students in 30 classrooms. The school will also include a library computer resource room, office space and restrooms. There will be an outdoor space where students can plan basketball and volleyball. Our goal is to raise one million dollars. We have been able to raise funds for the first and the second phases.

A dream can come true and what we think and believe can become a reality. So I am personally glad to inform you that on May 18, 2020 we started to build the first phase of our new school that cost \$206,350.00. This wonderful project will help to end the cycle of poverty for many children who will attend our new school.

The Crosiers seek to transform the lives and touch suffering with hope for the most needy in the Congo. The new K-12 Crosier Catholic School in Butembo will be a beacon of light for boys and girls from low-income families. It will help boys and girls to learn their Christian faith and how to end the cycle of poverty in their lives and will promote a culture of non-violence.

The school will help youth to dream big and never stop trying for the best of their future. The school will organize cultural activities which will promote the social cohesion. The school will welcome all youth without any discrimination of religion or sex and will also have

internal regulations that will promote discipline, collaboration and living together in peace between pupils and teachers. This school will be a place of welcome for the educational and spiritual formation of the population. In short, through these activities and formation that the school will offer, it will contribute to a sort of mental disarmament that remains the priority in the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The school will contribute to changing the mentality of youth and will help them move towards the future with confidence and optimism. It will help youth to be useful in society.



The Crosiers in the Congo are almost totally dependent on the generosity of others for support. We cannot continue to serve the Congolese people without the financial help of many friends of ours who believe in our ministries and services of making this world a better place. That is why I am inviting people of good will to join us to finish building the new school that will help us to reduce delinquency of youth and to decrease the high numbers of illiterate youth. Will you help us to finish the new school for the children of Butembo?

*Fr. Zawadi provided us with some additional information about the city of Butembo for context:*

Butembo is a city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, that is between two regions or territories: Lubero and Beni, in the Province of North-Kivu, at the extreme east of the Congo, near Uganda boarder. Butembo is about 11 miles from the equator north of Musienene, the headquarters of the chieftaincy of Baswagha, in the north hemisphere and about 9 miles west of Butungera-Vuhovi, chieftaincy of the headquarter of Bashu.

As for its altitude, the "Western Rift Valley" on the mountain of Mitumba is the near neighbor of the city of Butembo, which is constructed on several hills the altitude of which there is from 1.056 miles or 5577 feet above sea level. It has a mild climate because of the mountains so that there is an alternating of the short dry

## New School in the Congo Cont.

season from December to February. This is followed by a short rainy season which goes from March to June; but there are from time to time disturbances in this pattern. The great dry season goes generally almost in a repetitious fashion from July to mid-September and the great rainy season goes from the end of September to the beginning of December. The temperature varies between 56°F to 77°F.

Etymologically, the word Butembo comes from the name of the tree called “Muthembo” which is found in the courtyard of the chief of Lialo which is found at the present site of the neighborhood Lusando, going toward Vutsetse. This tree used to serve as a point of reference for mining agents who were in their vehicles going to the different quarry mines. Back in those times Butembo was a bush country with fields of coffee here and there and several small insignificant villages.

The installation of the mining companies of the great lakes (MGL) in the present neighborhood of Furu in the city of Butembo was done in 1928. The colonial administration wished that the site would facilitate the exploitation of mineral in the quarries of the Territory of Lubero.



The choice of the Butembo site to install the mining society called MGL, now called Sominki, had been motivated by the fact that Butembo offered the advantage of facilitating the necessities for mining and distribution of the materials on the west side of the Territory of Lubero, namely Magurujipa and Byambwe, and in the Territory of Beni. Having been familiar with the economy of the market, the workers of the MGL, retired or sent back to their villages, experienced a lot of difficulty to be reintegrated into their former way of village living. Following the request of this group of people, the administrator of the Territory of Lubero, authorized these workers to settle in this place to be called Butembo.

On 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1956, the King of Belgium by ordinance N° 97/138, erected the native city of Butembo as a center extra customary. Then the political administration of Butembo was subtracted from the power of the hereditary chiefs. So it came under an urban rule.

The first Chief was Romain Matokeo Musavuli. Who, with the goal of attracting more people, was careful to erect in Butembo an autonomous entity, giving without cost plots of land to the people. This practice will attract the population near by and also the Greek business men who were already settled in the headquarters of the Territory of Lubero about 30 miles to the south.

The whole Eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is constantly confronted with the situation of war and insecurity, practically since the year 1996. The countryside has particularly been affected by the situation of war and insecurity. The urban milieux have known moments of calm but have inescapably felt the pressure of the rural exodus following this situation of the lack of security in the countryside. Butembo has seen its population multiply by four times because of this situation. Even if Butembo had not been the theater of conflict and violence, it has known war in another way. It offers refuge to the people coming and settling in from the countryside. The commune Bulengera of the present city is new, populated by people coming from the countryside. This poses the problem of a welcoming infrastructure. Butembo is populated in the majority by people who have just come from the countryside and who do not have sufficient resources to survive.

The socio-economic life of the people remains dependent on the agricultural activities that are taking place in the rural areas that are not secure. The city of Butembo has no infrastructure that is sufficient. No water supply, no electricity, no paved roads. People are living as in a village, with a population of about 100,000 people. In this kind of situation it is obvious that there is a great need for education of youth especially for poor families. Is that not our mission to help first the most in need?

To have a new Catholic K-12 School sponsored by the Crosier Fathers and Brothers is a great need for the people we are serving in Butembo. We want to touch suffering with hope for those youth who do not have the opportunity of having a school where they can learn how to end the circle of poverty in their life and promote the culture of peace and forgiveness.

To support our efforts in the third and fourth phases of building a new Crosier K-12 Catholic School in Butembo you can send your donation to Saint Cloud Mission office at:

**St. Cloud Mission Office/ Society for the Propagation of the Faith**  
**11- 8th Ave. So.**  
**St. Cloud, MN. 56301.**

Your donation of:  
 \$500 will help to buy furniture  
 \$1,000 will help to buy sheet metal  
 \$2,500 will help to buy cement  
 \$10,000 will help to build one classroom for 55 children



## Spotlight on Mission

*There are countless mission activities happening all the time both in the St. Cloud Diocese and around the world. All these mission activities are important to the work of celebrating our global Church. In this issue we highlight Bro. Loren Beaudry, currently serving in Tanzania.*

Greetings from Mwanza, Tanzania.

Sorry I haven't been writing lately. I will give you the latest news from Tanzania.

**The Coronavirus:** This last month on March 17, 2021, our Tanzanian President, John Magufuli, died. He was only 61 years of age. The report is that he died from a poor heart condition. However, many people believe that Coronavirus also played a role in his death. Former President Magufuli was strongly against any publication on the virus. He claimed that the Coronavirus doesn't exist in Tanzania. People could be punished in Tanzania for claiming positive Covid 19 reports. If people got very sick and died, it was said it was not the Coronavirus that caused the death, but some other kind of sickness. Because of this, it made it difficult to know just how bad Coronavirus had spread in Tanzania.

Our new President, President Samia Suluhu Hassan, [a Woman] is taking a new approach to the Coronavirus and is asking medical professionals to do a research on the topic and to give us an update. She is asking Tanzanians to use precaution, [such as washing your hands, wearing face mask etc. etc.] to fight the Coronavirus.

**What is going on in our missionary work?** We are now in the process of making an orchard of various



fruits trees which we hope that in two years time, will bring in money, not only for the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, but also for the Archdiocese of Mwanza. Maryknoll bought the Brothers a tractor and trailer. With the money I've

received from you, we were able to buy two 5000 litter water tanks, build a stand and buy water hoses and facets. We are now in the process of buying and planting 100 fruit trees from 6 different type of fruits.

Every week I visit a program that caters to people suffering from mental illness. There are 24 to 26 residents. With your money, I was able to buy 12 new mattresses and 16 new beds. The residents are very happy and appreciative of your generous support.

Sincerely yours,  
Bro. Loren Beaudry M.M.

*\*pictures of mattresses and beds provided by Bro. Loren\**

*This letter was received from Fr. John Schwieters, currently serving in Brazil.*

It's so good to know the people continue to remember the missions and places far from home. The people of the St. Cloud Diocese are in our prayers at weekly Mass.

How is life in our part of the world? Well, ever since last year, Brazil was and is running second to the USA in numbers of infected people ... but now with the change of administration up there, we should be vying for first place, if that's anything to take pride in, unless from what we're hearing about India. I hope our president gets some "good advice" during the "CLIMATE CRISIS DAYS" that are going on right now. How can anyone in this time of history be so "out of it".

Most of the friars in my community of nine came down with COVID ... I for three weeks in February, and we were on strict "lockdown". The bad effect that accompanies me now is a real loss of memory ... and when you're trying to switch from one language to the other, that leaves you hanging at times. But the worst our Custody experienced was the loss of two younger men, one 59 years old, who was originally from Colombia, and had been with us for about 15 years, who was finishing his degree in medicine. In fact our Minister received his

diploma while he was still in intensive care, from which he never recovered, and died on 03/29. The other was 64 and died on 04/16. He was a river-city parish priest, called Itaituba, and also worked rural communities along the Tapajós River. He was a really good friend of mine, having been in the second year of novices who I accompanied back in '79. And not to say how many people are dying every day in and around Santarem. This is a very difficult time, yet a time for real examination and prayer.

I was supposed to be on vacation this summer, but the States closed its borders to Brazil ... so that tells the whole story. Let's see what that will mean by next year. Still, I'm very moved by the "missionary spirit" that continues to prevail in the whole Diocese, and the generosity you report from the people. Thanks so much for all you do to encourage the people to look widely and beyond, and be reassured that we who benefit from such generosity will remember you always in prayer, as well as put the proceeds to good use.

And a special thank you to all of you ... it always feels good to be remembered.  
Abraços – Fr. John Schwieters

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## Expanding Our Mission Connections:

We are still looking for people passionate about Mission and Solidarity to join our Mission Connections Team!

This team is working to promote and support different mission connections we have around the globe, including our diocesan partnerships in Kenya and Venezuela.

If you are interested in joining or would like more information about this exciting opportunity, please contact Teresa at the Mission Office!

Email: [missionofficeeducator@cloudnet.com](mailto:missionofficeeducator@cloudnet.com)

Phone: (320) 251-1100

## Stay Connected!

Looking for ways to stay connected with us on a regular basis? Visit our Website, like our page on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram!

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