



For We Are GOD'S HELPERS

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Missionaries Discover a Whole New World

From Janice England, Executive Director LMH

Life is not easy in the *aldeas* (villages) of Guatemala. The people are primarily subsistence farmers and work hard just to survive. They have little access to education or medical care.

I had the opportunity to visit an *aldea* on a recent trip to Guatemala to visit our Lay Mission-Helper, Mitch Tolbert, who is serving his second term of service in the Vicariate of Flores, Peten. We traveled with Maryknoll priest, Fr. Bill Mullan, where he celebrated Mass, first communion, performed a marriage ceremony and baptized children.

The *aldeas* are in remote areas and the people are Q'uechi (Indian). The church was a wooden structure with a dirt floor and thatch roof. After Mass we went to a parishioner's house where we were served a meal of rice, chicken soup and tortillas. I later learned that chicken is eaten only on special occasions and is quite expensive. Their staple diet is beans and tortillas. The house was similar in structure to the church, and the only "furniture" I could see was a hammock, a wooden bed (no mattress or pillow), and a stove (three-stone fire with wood).

Looking from the outside, one might wonder "How can anyone be happy under these circumstances?" Yet, surprisingly, they do find joy in life and give thanks to God for all that they have. Their faith is simple, yet strong.

Another missionary commented on the plane trip back to the U.S. that she felt she was literally in



Q'uechi women and children at Mass at an *aldea*.

a machine that transported her from one world to the next. And it is true. Back in the States one forgets that two-thirds of the world lives in similar circumstances as those in the *aldeas*.

Our Lay Mission-Helpers, by sharing their skills and faith with people in the missions, are making a difference. They are educating future leaders, caring for the sick, administering at institutions that benefit the needy, and much more. They are helping to change the world, one person at a time.

But the sharing is not one sided. The people with whom our LMH'ers serve are also teaching them. In this newsletter you will read an article by Deanna Bowers who gives thanks for the gifts she gained in Cameroon and how Tara Condon finds joy in her new ministry and wonders who is touching who.

And none of this would be possible without you, our *Partners in Mission*. You will see how the money you generously donated was used this past year. Each donation, each prayer said, has and continues to make a difference.

With sincere thanks,

Janice England

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Missions On the Move

Living Their Faith Proves a Life-Changing Experience

By Tara Condon

For most of our lives, Aaron and I have felt the desire to live out our faith as missionaries. When LMH gave our family the opportunity, we were overjoyed. Our assignment was to the Marshall Islands, to live in Majuro, Aaron working in Media, and me working as Outer Island Support in the Monsignor's office.

At first we were discouraged because our first five months were very rough. We hadn't planned on so much opposition; the heat, the bugs, the isolation, but

as we trusted God and said we would not give up, we saw Him move in incredible ways. First, He allowed us to move from our first place of residence in a remote section, to a house built by Aaron and a crew directly on the Church campus. Secondly, He brought us fulfillment in the "Small Island Kids." Small Island is a section of Majuro near our house; very poor, like the slums of the city. The kids that live there have been called "the poorest of the poor," so when they began coming to our porch daily, pressing their little faces against our security screen, we began allowing them to come inside to play. Now, it has turned into everyday from 3pm until 6pm. Because of this, we refer

So far, it has been the most amazing thing we could ever do and we aren't sure who is touching who—the kids show us as much love as we try to show them.

to our "unofficial" job in the Marshall Islands as being child care providers to the Small Island Kids. Having over twenty kids each day pulling on you and trying to get your attention, not to mention your own two children, can be overwhelming. But because we have reached out to them, we have been able to form incredibly trusting relationships with them.

We have begun a Wednesday night Dinner Night; allowing two of the kids to come for dinner, for pizza and ice cream. We have a chance to get to know them further, and when they finish, we walk them back with two handmade loaves of bread for their families. On Friday night, we have started a Movie Night on our porch, using a projector and screen. We serve popcorn and water, and have about seventy kids! Aaron gives haircuts to the boys

who can't afford them; they come to us for water and band-aids and to be listened to. So far, it has been the most amazing thing we could ever do and we aren't sure who is touching who—the kids show us as much love as we try to show them.

Also, Aaron had the opportunity to film the Catholic workshops here over the summer. The Youth one was awesome; all of the Catholic Marshallese youth leaders came and Aaron caught on tape their renewal to faith,

their desire to follow Christ and surrender to Him. Now, we are a part of the overflow; meeting with the Youth every Monday night to speak, worship, and pray over them; supporting them to keep the commitment they made over the summer.

There are things we never thought we would be doing, that we now do. And things we never wanted to do that God has shown us have a purpose in our lives. We watch in awe as our children

are carried around by the Marshallese kids—their new brothers and sisters. We have only been here for seven months, and yet we feel what we have gained is far more than we have been able to give. We are in love with the people of these Islands and we are so thankful to LMH and to you for allowing us the blessing of this life-changing opportunity! Please check our website at Condonfamilymission.com for pictures and stories of our experience here. ■



Left to right, Aaron, Cana, Tara, and Ocean Condon.



"Small Island Kids" have become a second family to the Condon's.

's Helpers

2005 Annual Report



Bowers' Give a Hand to LMH Supporters

By Deanna Bowers

We came in 2003, and you extended your hands in greeting. We joined hands with you in teaching, nursing, planning, budgeting, and building, as individuals, at meetings and in socials. We lifted our hands in prayer with you—at the parish, at St. Rita's, in condolences, at celebrations, in gratitude and in praise of God. We worked with our hands—working together with you for the infirmary, the library, the emergency generator, St. Joseph Dormitory, the walkway reconstruction, and the foundations for new classrooms and an expanded home economics laboratory.

We extended healing hands, the hands of Jesus, the Healer—for those who were ill or injured, and even for repair of the church, school buildings and budgets. We held your hands in friendship, appreciating your gifts of wisdom, interest, hospitality, and love of God. We have received more than we could possibly give...

Thank you for your loving response to us.

We will remember your hands...

- the soft fat hands of small babies
- the weathered hands of the old

(continued on page 4)

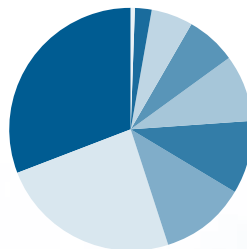
You, our Partners in Mission, make it possible for the Lay Mission-Helpers to continue the legacy of Msgr. Anthony Brouwers. Because of your generous support, we were able to train six LMH Candidates last year. Because of you, 16 Lay Mission-Helpers were able to provide education, health care, clean water, administrative and pastoral assistance to thousands of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. We are grateful to each and every one of you for helping us continue to change the world, one person at a time. Below you'll find our 2005 report of gifts and how they were used.

Sources of Gifts

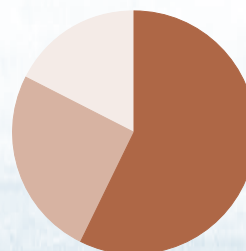
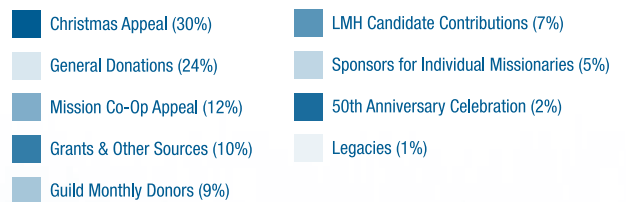
Legacies (1%)	1,357.00
50th Anniversary Celebration (2%)	3,626.00
Sponsors for Individual Missionaries (5%)	9,225.00
LMH Candidate Contributions (7%)	11,259.00
Guild Monthly Donors (9%)	15,075.00
Grants & Other Sources (10%)	16,000.00
Mission Co-Op Appeal (12%)	19,525.00
General Donations (24%)	40,277.00
Christmas Appeal (30%)	51,831.00
TOTAL	168,175.00

How Your Gifts Were Used

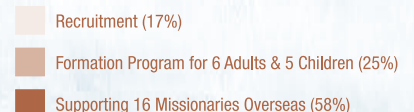
Supporting 16 Missionaries Overseas (58%)	93,611.00
Formation Program for 6 Adults & 5 Children (25%)	41,232.00
Recruitment (17%)	28,512.00
TOTAL	163,355.00



Sources of Gifts



How Your Gifts Were Used





LMH Mission Statement

We are Catholic lay people, single men and women, married couples, and families, called through our baptism to walk with the poor of other countries sharing our gifts, living our faith, and learning from one another. We are teachers, nurses, social workers, computer technicians, administrators, tradesmen, and others who work together and strive to live a simple life close to the poor.

Please remember LMH in your Will. For more information contact the Lay Mission-Helpers Association at (213) 368-1870 or visit our website at www.laymissionhelpers.org

NOTE: THE LEGAL NAME FOR LMH IS THE LAY MISSION-HELPERS ASSOCIATION.

LMH Board of Directors

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Lay Mission-Helpers
Association, founded in 1955
by Msgr. Anthony Brouwers

Bowers (cont.)

(continued from page 3)

- women still working their farms,
- the hands of priests elevating the Eucharist at Mass
- the tough hands of workers doing so much hard manual labor
- the raised hands of students anxious to answer a question (and sometimes not)
- the helping hands of fellow Lay Mission-Helpers in Kumbo Diocese
- and always, your hands offered in greeting, an offering of peace and friendship.



Warren Bowers teaches carpentry to students at St. Rita's Vocational School in Cameroon.

To our American friends, family and all who support the activities of Lay Mission-Helpers:

We are grateful to you and to God for your hands...

- the devout hands folded in prayer for our welfare and mission
- the hands which wrote words of news from home and encouragement—by letter, by e-mail and by phone
- the strong hands that packed books, packages and teaching aids for St. Rita's
- the generous hands that gave funds for building, books, computers, and student fees
- the talented hands of the LMH staff and teachers who provided such appropriate training
- and the giving hands of all LMH benefactors.

As we return to California and the family and friends who made our mission for Christ to Cameroon possible, we entrust it all to God and promise to continue our prayers and personal support. We remember the words of St. Paul inscribed in the rings on our own hands, "For we are God's helpers." 1Cor, 3:9 Jesus, we leave it "In Your Hands..." ■

Your support for Lay Mission-Helpers makes you a missionary, too as you pray and sacrifice so that the poorest in the Missions may know the love of Christ.

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