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MissionAid
December 2015
Issue 99

Welcome to the December Issue!



Fr. Richard O'Dwyer, a Jesuit missionary from Ireland, talks with women at the Multi-Agricultural Jesuit Institute of Sudan (MAJIS), an agricultural school located outside Rumbek, South Sudan. O'Dwyer is the school's director. Photo: Paul Jeffrey.

A Message from our CEO

I think you will all agree that this year, although busy at times, has been fruitful and we have made great progress in our fight against poverty and injustice. We have lots to be thankful for, and I am very thankful for our members and my Misean Cara colleagues who have done phenomenal work in more than 50 countries transforming lives and communities.

As you may remember from our past issues of MissionAid, Sr. Dr. Miriam Duggan from the Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa was recognised by President Michael D. Higgins with a Distinguished Service Award. Sr. Miriam was honoured for her life-long work in HIV and AIDS prevention and care. She accepted the award on behalf of all missionaries who work to meet the needs of the poor, and marginalised. [Please read Sr. Dr. Miriam's acceptance comments on the Misean Cara website.](#) It was wonderful to reconnect with Sr. Miriam at the recent 10th Annual Professor Michael Kelly Lecture on HIV and AIDS hosted by Irish Aid. When I visited Kenya I witnessed first hand the great transformational work Sr. Miriam and her congregation are doing with school drop-outs, drug addicts and those who have lost hope because of poverty and lack of employment.

I was also delighted to speak at the launch of the "Make Human Rights Work" Handbook where we partnered with All Together in Dignity Ireland (ATD). For perhaps the first time in history, a set of United Nations principles on Human Rights and Poverty have been translated into concrete suggestions for



CEO Heydi Foster

News Stories

[Driving Venezuela](#)

[Interview with Indigenous Women's Rights and Climate Justice Activist Alina Saba](#)

[Inspire leaders. Pontifex, Hear Us.](#)

[Consider the invisible. Pontifex, Hear Us.](#)

[Preserve our only safe place. Pontifex, Hear Us.](#)

everyday action by people.

Spearheaded by Franciscans International and ATD International, with support of Irish stakeholders (Misean Cara, Edmund Rice International), dozens of grassroots organisations worldwide, as well as individuals with a lived experience of poverty, have created a handbook to make human rights work for all. I shared examples of your work. In particular I spoke about missionaries like Sr. Mary Killeen from the Mercy Sisters in Kenya and the Association for the Promotion of Human Rights El Mozote, which is supported by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary (Chigwell) who work with the survivors of the El Mozote massacre in El Salvador.

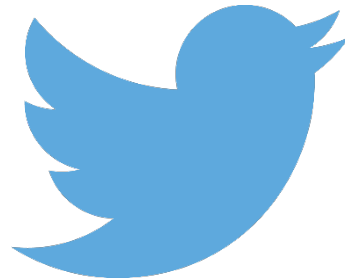
Finally as we get ready to take a break for Christmas, I want us to reflect on the work we have completed this year - look at what we have achieved, what we did well, and what we can learn from in the coming year. The New Year gives us all the opportunity to start over with renewed vigour, to go beyond what we have achieved this year. Pope Francis recently said "to change the world we must be good to those who cannot repay us," and I believe these words echo the charism of all missionaries. We have a powerful example in Pope Francis.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Kind regards,
Heydi

Send us your photos and videos!

We want to help showcase the work of our members by sharing photos, stories and videos of the wonderful work you do on our website, Facebook Page and MissionAid. If you have a photo, story or video to share then please email Tara Finglas tfinglas@miseancara.ie



Connect with us on Twitter!

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Heydi Foster

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We Want To Promote The Wonderful Work You Do!

We want to help showcase the wonderful work you do by sharing stories; updates; photos; and video on our website, Facebook and LinkedIn Pages, Twitter account, and in our monthly e-newsletter MissionAid.

If you have a story, update, photo, or video to share then please email our Communications Officer Teresa Finglas tfinglas@miseancara.ie

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Update From Our Board Chairperson

Warmest greetings to you all,

The Board met on 1st December for our last meeting of 2015. In all, the Board met nine times this year, including its 2-day induction and first strategic planning session in November.

Strategic Planning

The Board held its first strategic planning session at the end of November, ahead of the upcoming new strategy cycle from 2017. This was the first of a number of sessions that will take place as we start working together with the CEO and her team through 2016 on the new Strategic Plan.

Presidential Distinguished Service Awards 2015

Congratulations to Sr. Dr. Miriam Duggan FMSA, and Fr. Donal Doyle SJ on receiving their Presidential Distinguished Service Awards from President Michael D. Higgins on December 3rd in recognition of their outstanding service in the fields of charitable works and business and education. The Awards honour the work of exceptional people who contribute to Ireland and to Irish communities abroad. [Read Now.](#)



Chairperson Lucy Franks

Stories from the field

Women can change the world. Pontifex, Hear Us.



I dream to become an engineer one day, and an important woman in this world. Women are human beings, we are equal to men. We need to be united so we can create a better world together. I would like to live freely like everybody else, I have dreams of having my own family like anyone else. [Read now.](#)

Pray for us. Pontifex, Hear Us.



I am from Jonglei state, South Sudan which is now totally destroyed from the recent conflict. I came to Kakuma in 1992 when the camp first opened. When I arrived I was 24

and I didn't have a single day of education so I started with the first class of primary school. By 2004, I had graduated from secondary school and in 2005 I became a mental health supervisor with the Jesuit Refugee Service in the camp. [Read now.](#)

The Long Road To Justice



I am the President of the Association for the Promotion of Human Rights El Mozote. The organisation was founded, and has obtained legal capacity thanks to the support from the projects funded by Misesan Cara.

From the aforementioned projects I have received many benefits on a personal level, such as, human rights training and psycho-social assistance that has helped me overcome many obstacles. On a community level, thanks to having the association legalised, we have had the opportunity to open a dialogue with different governmental departments, through which we have obtained improvements to the existing monument in remembrance of the victims of the massacre; and in the area of family health we now have a team of community health professionals working with the local population and our families. [Read now.](#)

Making Human Rights Work for People Living in Extreme Poverty



In advance of this year's Human Rights Day, All Together in Dignity Ireland (ATD) and Misean Cara launch a new handbook "Make Human Rights Work" in Ozanam House on Mountjoy Square in Dublin to help everyone take action for human rights.

For the first time in history, the handbook translates a set of United Nations (UN) principles on human rights and poverty situations into action points that we all can use to affect change. Spearheaded by Franciscans International and ATD International, with support from Irish Aid through Misean Cara, and Edmund Rice Development, dozens of grassroots organisations worldwide, and individuals with a lived experience of poverty, have created a handbook to make human rights work for all. [Read now.](#)

Walk with us. Pontifex, Hear Us.



I was born in 1975 in Jonglei State, South Sudan. One night in 1987 my home town was blasted by the Khartoum army. I fled toward Ethiopia but found myself trapped by soldiers, forced to become one of them. I fought as a child soldier until 1994, but I eventually saw that war would not achieve my dreams so I escaped to Kakuma refugee camp where I could attend school. [Read now.](#)

The Joy of Seeing Pope Francis in Kenya



When I first heard that Pope Francis was coming to Uganda as far back as July, I immediately booked a room at our Convent in Laverna, Kampala Uganda. Shortly after this

we heard that Pope Francis was coming to Kenya from 25th-27th November. I was so happy and knew that I only had to travel about 3 hours to see him. My next step, I did not want to waste any time on the roads with traffic jams and hold ups, and so decided to book into a nearby Convent where if possible and if necessary I could walk to see him. [Read now.](#)

The Presidential Distinguished Service Award Is Affirmation of Missionary Work



Comments by Sr. Dr. Miriam Duggan FMSA who will receive a Presidential Distinguished Service Award from President Michael D. Higgins at Áras an Uachtaráin on 3 December 2015.

It is with humility that I accept this Presidential Distinguished Service Award not for myself but in recognition of the contribution of my colleagues in the Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa congregation, and all missionaries in meeting the needs of the poor and those on the margins of society throughout the world – our brothers and sisters. [Read now.](#)

Pope Francis in Kenya: A Private Audience with the DREAM Clients and Staff



During Pope Francis's three day visit to Kenya, he graciously and with affection had a visit with 15 DREAM clients, representative of all the clients, including 14 infants and toddlers, 2 years of age and under, who were born HIV free through the intervention of the 'Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission' program of the DREAM Centre.

As Pope Francis approached the venue the mothers greeted him with a loud, joyous African chant. He met every single one who was introduced by Grace a staff member. He blessed and touched every child. The infants responded with smiles and only one baby cried. The Pope commented: "he thinks I am the doctor because of my white outfit." [Read now.](#)

Events and Training Courses

Upcoming Events & Training Courses:

- [European Year for Development #EYD2015](#)
- [Kimmage Development Studies Centre](#)
- [Child Safeguarding - Organisational Self Audit Tool \(Free\)](#)
- [The International NGO Training and Research Centre \(INTRAC\)](#)

Misean Cara is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. It is registered in Dublin, Ireland, No: 381117. Its registered office is: 563 South Circular, Kilmainham, Dublin 8. It has been granted tax exemption by the Revenue Commissioners in Ireland and has a charitable tax exemption number: CHY15772.