



THE MISSIONS

OF THE AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS

Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova

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Dear Friends of the Augustinian Missions:

Philadelphia is a great distance in miles and a very different world from our missions in Peru and South Africa. A ministry of the Augustinian Friars is to be “bridge builders” among people. A powerful witness to this is the interaction between Augustinian schools in the United States and our foreign missions.

In the month of May, JFK Airport in New York saw three groups from American Augustinian schools depart for a service experience in our missions in South Africa and Peru. A group of nine student nurses from Villanova University and fourteen senior students from Malvern Preparatory School in Malvern, PA, began the long flight half way around the world to South Africa. Another group of fourteen Malvern seniors departed for service to our mission in Peru.

The purpose of their ten day experience is twofold: first, group members offer their particular skills in helping in the lives of the poor they encounter, whether it is the student nurses giving physical exams to orphans, or Malvern students swinging a machete to clear the brush for a garden or rolling paint on the walls of an orphanage; secondly, they interact with people of another culture in order that people from both arenas might come to know the other. There is an exchange of people and lives from other parts of the world.

In this issue of the **Mission Newsletter** you will receive only the smallest glimpse of the tremendous bridge between the American Augustinian schools and the foreign missions of the friars. We are very proud of our American students for their service to the poor of our missions. These are experiences which no one involved will ever forget.

Thank you for your continued support of our missions.

In St. Augustine,

Anthony P. Burrascano, O.S.A.
Director, Mission Office



Two worlds meet: A Malvern Prep student and a Zulu child encounter each other.



Malvern Prep Students in South Africa

The experience of the Malvern Prep students continued to expand during their visit to South Africa. This year the students spent a great deal of time and energy far out in the African countryside putting up fences. Why did they come to Africa to build fences? They built fences because of HIV AIDS. South Africa has one of the highest incidences of HIV AIDS in the world, which results in the death of a large portion of young parents, leaving their children as orphans. It often falls to the grandmothers, called Go Gos, to raise and provide for the children. These women barely have enough resources to sustain themselves, let alone a group of children. One means to help provide food is for the Go Gos to plant a garden, but as with gardens throughout the world, animals roaming into the garden to eat the produce present a problem. So fencing helps to keep the animals out and the garden growing. Obviously, the grandmothers cannot dig the postholes, secure the fence posts or string the fencing, but young Malvern Prep seniors can, and they did a fantastic job. By their labor, these students not only provided the means for the poor to provide food, they have changed lives. More importantly, these young men from America reached out and touched the lives of others, and in turn, their lives were also touched by their experience.



Malvern Prep students stringing fencing.

Malvern Prep Students in Peru



Malvern Prep seniors heading home after a hard day's work in Peru.

The students had a rich and varied experience of the culture and the people of Peru. They reached out and touched the lives of Peruvians of all ages. The Prep men spent time in the grade school of Santissima Cruz interacting with the children, teaching English classes and, of course, engaging students with the universal language of soccer. The Americans visited CEO Betania, a women's center founded by the American Sisters of Mercy, a place that helps to improve the lives of Peruvian women through education, skills training and health care. Time was also spent in a residence for the elderly and an orphanage. Although it is "winter" in the southern hemisphere, a day at the beach with the children was a relief from not only the heat of the desert but the heat of work, as well.

A Very Sad Farewell

After serving as an Augustinian Volunteer in the Bronx, NY and South Africa, Brian Strassburger accepted the position of Assistant Mission Director. After two and a half years in that position, Brian has left the position and entered Religious life in the Society of Jesus. We thank Brian for his dedication to the Missions Office and wish him the best.



Brian Strassburger



Supporting the Missions

The main source of financial support for our missions is through the preaching of Mission Appeals in parishes during the summer months. The other important source of support is from you, our generous benefactors receiving this **Mission Newsletter**. Can you make a commitment to support the foreign missions with as little as \$20.00 per month? To donate online, visit our website. Click here for the [Augustinian Fund](#) webpage. Please check the box labeled **Augustinian Fund: Missions**.



An African child.

Thank you for your continued support!

25th Anniversary Celebration

This year the Augustinian Vicariate of Chulucanas in Peru celebrates its 25th Anniversary. A Vicariate in the Order is a region which is moving toward independence from the mother Province, in this case the Augustinian Midwest Province in Chicago. To become a Vicariate there must be a minimum number of 15 Solemnly Professed friars. At the present time there are seven American and 17 Peruvian friars in the Vicariate. Becoming a Vicariate is a tribute to the hard and dedicated work of the founding friars in Peru since the 1960's. A celebration of this momentous event will take place on the weekend of September 9-11, in Chulucanas, Peru.



A New Friar in South Africa

In early June, Brother Craig McMahon, O.S.A., arrived at our mission in South Africa. In the midst of theological studies our students are required to participate in a Pastoral Year, where some of the academic studies are experienced in the lived pastoral ministry within an Augustinian community. Brother Craig requested that he spend his Pastoral Year in the African mission. With his arrival our community in Bothas Hill is now five friars and three Augustinian Volunteers.



Bro. Craig McMahon, O.S.A.

Missions Blog & Augustinian.org Website

Please visit the new Missions Blog found on the Augustinian website, [Augustinian.org](#). Under the drop down menu "What We Do," go to the column title "Missions" and then to "Blog." Or click here: [Missions Blog](#).

Keep up to date with what is occurring in our missions. Please check back often for updates!

Villanova Student Nurses in South Africa

By Jennifer DePoy



Nursing is truly a global profession. For two weeks in May, nine Villanova nursing students, two nursing professors, and 22 suitcases (mostly donations!) were lucky enough to travel to Durban, South Africa for a global field experience. After months of preparation, the group was able to experience first-hand the wonderfully welcoming Zulu culture. Each day, the group spent time at various sites including the Hillcrest AIDS Center Respite Unit, St. Leo's Primary School, Thousand Hills Community Center and St. Theresa's Home for Boys.

During their time at the AIDS Center, the nurses spent one-on-one time with the patients providing basic care, attending home visits, playing cards, making art projects and learning about one another. While at the Thousand Hills Community Center, the members of the group assisted at the weekly baby clinic as well as at the family clinic. In addition, nurses spent time with the preschool children at the center giving out an incredible amount of hugs!

Prior to their departure to South Africa, the nursing students prepared health promotion lessons including exercise, heart health, hygiene, stress management and healthcare professions. Each of the groups presented the various topics to groups of students at St. Leo's School and St. Theresa's Home for Boys. The projects included interactive lessons such as dance, music, and coloring! The students especially loved the heart model and the teaching stethoscopes from the College of Nursing Learning Resource Center. While at St. Theresa's Home, the nursing group performed physicals on each of the 60 boys and gave out many stickers! Each afternoon, once the physicals were complete, the nurses and boys spent lots of time playing games, working on homework, making necklaces and creating artistic masterpieces.

School Fund Raiser

Over the past year several Augustinian schools in the U.S. have supported the missions through fund raising events. Schools include: Our Lady of Good Counsel, Staten Island, NY; Merrimack College, North Andover, MA; St. Augustine Prep, Richland, NJ and Malvern Prep, Malvern, PA. We are grateful for their interest and efforts on behalf of the missions.



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