

Special Edition 2007

Evangelizer

Conquering Poverty with the Richness of our Catholic Faith



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Dear Friend | Bishop Pedro Pablo Elizondo, LC

In this, my third year as bishop in this beautiful Prelature of Cancún-Chetumal in the Yucatan Peninsula, I wanted to thank you for your continuous support. Without your generosity, we would never have been able to accomplish so many life changing projects in so little time. Furthermore, I wish to take this opportunity to update you on the blessings we have received and milestones we have reached together as we continue to evangelize the poor with love.

First, I would like to thank Pope Benedict XVI, in challenging all Catholics in his encyclical letter called "God is Love" (*Deus Caritas Est*) to live the gospel to its ultimate consequences. Indeed, God is love, and by our actions we become agents of his love in this world. Your support for Catholic World Mission (CWM) is one expression of this love, through which we are able to bring in a very real manner hope to more people every day. Most importantly, this love has not gone unnoticed by Our Lord, and by the little souls you have helped personally.



In the past months we were fully engaged in new efforts and greater outreach around the world. This outreach included: the continual clean-up and rebuilding from natural disasters such as the Tsunami and Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma (see pg.4). In addition to these efforts, we were able to start a sponsorship program at an orphan school in Tanzania overseen by Bishop Niwemugizi (himself, at one time, an orphan) in the Diocese of Rulenge. In the Middle East, CWM partnered with the Vatican's Notre Dame Center of Jerusalem to assist displaced victims of all faiths as a consequence of the painful conflicts in southern Lebanon.

Furthermore, in this issue of *Evangelizer*, I am happy to announce the completion of a safe house for pregnant teenage girls in Itapecerica, the largest slum of Sao Paulo, Brazil, as an alternative to abortion. While providing housing for these girls, the project will also offer schooling for over 500 children and will provide an integral Catholic education for boys and girls ages 3 to 10. With your continued help we plan to open an additional grade-level each year.

We are also happy to report that our Mano Amiga Student Sponsorship Program has been enthusiastically embraced by donors across the US and Canada (see pg.8). At press time, we have secured sponsorships for 7,597* students while 9,153* still need sponsors. As a sponsor, you are matched with a specific child, age 4-17, who is in need of a scholarship in order to attend school. In addition the sponsor receives three updates on the student during the school year. Together, in 2007 we will join Benedict XVI in engaging the Christian faithful in the work of bringing the charity and message of Christ to a world with so many spiritual and material needs.

Thank you for joining us in our efforts to conquer poverty with the richness of the Catholic faith. As a final note, I would welcome your prayer intentions. The seminarians and I will pray for you in Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a Sacrament of Charity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Pedro Pablo Elizondo, LC".

*As of April 31, 2007

Bishop Pedro Pablo Elizondo, LC
Prelate of Cancún-Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico
President, Catholic World Mission

In 1970 Pope Paul VI entrusted the Legionaries of Christ with the pastoral care of the newly created missionary territory of Chetumal (now Cancún-Chetumal in the state of Quintana Roo, Mexico). Since 2004 Bishop Pedro Pablo Elizondo, LC has been the Prelate of Cancún-Chetumal and also the President of Catholic World Mission (CWM). CWM exists to bring education and the message of Christ to our poorest brothers and sisters throughout the world. We strive for the long-term transformation of poverty by alleviating immediate physical suffering and by helping the poor provide for themselves in this life and grow in holiness to reap their eternal reward in heaven!

Bishop Pedro Pablo began his priestly training in Connecticut in the late 60's. Years later, after ordination, he served as instructor of Novices in Cheshire, CT. He was ordained a bishop by John Paul II in 2004. In 2005 he opened a junior seminary in his prelate. It continues to grow today.



Bishop Pedro Pablo on a recent visit to Bacalar.



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ON THE COVER: Pope Benedict XVI greets Bishop Pedro Pablo Elizondo, LC, President of Catholic World Mission. Inset: On the same day Alejandro Pinelo founder of our Evangelizadores de Tiempo Completo – full-time Lay Missionaries – program was also greeted by Pope Benedict.

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A Brief History of El Salvador

El Salvador is the smallest country in Central America, yet it is honored to be named after The Savior (English for El Salvador). It is bordered by Guatemala, Honduras and the Pacific Ocean. According to the UN Development Program Indicators, more than 60% of the population lives in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty. Salvadorans have the reputation of being the hardest working people of the Central American region, but they struggle because of lack of education and basic healthcare.



In addition, El Salvador suffered through a 12 year war that ended in 1992 and has had to deal with devastating natural disasters throughout its history. On January 13th and February 13th 2001, El Salvador was struck by two massive earthquakes that left more than one million people without adequate housing.

A group of 250 citizens organized aid delivery to the most effected communities in an initiative that they called Solidarity Saturdays. After more than 12 Saturdays of delivering food and clothing to the earthquake victims, they realized that although this initiative was addressing the immediate needs of the people, it would not have a long term impact in their lives. They decided to readdress their efforts in an initiative that would have a long-

term impact on their lives. In May 2001 they established the CIDECO Foundation in the Department of La Paz, which was one of the areas that was most effected by the earthquakes. When CIDECO was established, it was only a dream, but many local and international benefactors quickly joined this effort to build more than 200 homes, a community center, a small marketplace, a health clinic and a school.

In the first phase of the CIDECO project, completed in December of 2003, 115 houses were built and given to families who lived under conditions of extreme poverty and had lost everything during the earthquakes. The second phase was completed in February of 2006; 112 more houses were built and given to earthquake survivors. Furthermore, the Mano Amiga El Salvador School started operating in 2002 and the health clinic in 2003.

Today more than 200 families now have a clean and safe environment in which to develop and grow. They now have access to education and health services. The Mano Amiga school has enrolled more than 550 students and the health clinic gives more than 20,000 medical services per year, not only to members of the CIDECO community, but also to over 15,000 people in the neighboring communities. All of this was possible thanks to you! God bless you for your intention to become part of this effort to spread the Word of God among the neediest population of El Salvador.



Phase III of the CIDECO Project

Saint Patrick's Church – A Community Parish

- More than 35,000 people are served by the CIDECO community from Santiago to Nonualco.
- St. Patrick's Church will be the newest addition to the CIDECO Project which already has has a Catholic school, a health clinic, a marketplace, a common area, sports facilities and low-cost housing allowing for human, educational and spiritual formation. The goal is to complete construction by March 2008.
- St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church which will serve as a parish and community center.
- A place to participate in the Holy Mass and receive the Sacraments.



The 82nd Airborne and the 'Hands of Christ'

Soon after Hurricane Katrina broke the levees around New Orleans, President Bush sent the 82nd Airborne Division to prevent looting at St. Louis Cathedral, located in the French Quarter. What they discovered there Archbishop Alfred Hughes of New Orleans considers a message to all of us.



In the St. Anthony Garden behind the Cathedral, there is a large statue of Jesus, his Sacred Heart exposed and his Hands raised to call us in. Apparently, during Hurricane Katrina, with oak and magnolia trees crashing around it, the thumb and index finger of the statue's left hand were broken off, though the rest of the statue was unharmed.

"The 82nd Airborne always secures the most important locations in the city," said Archbishop Hannan, the 92 year old retired archbishop of New Orleans, "so they were sent to the Superdome and the Cathedral. In cleaning up the garden they saw the statue of Christ was lacking two fingers. Immediately, they tried to find them." They found one and when they discovered that Archbishop Hannan had been the chaplain to the 82nd Airborne in World War II, they presented it to him.

The other finger had been rescued by a parishioner earlier, and both fingers were eventually presented to Archbishop Alfred Hughes, the current archbishop.

"When I celebrated Mass in St. Louis Cathedral after the storm, I indicated to the congregation that I saw that statue, first of all, as a symbol of God's faithful love for us," Archbishop Hughes said. "His Sacred Heart wanting to transform us and strengthen us, forgive us, but also save us. Secondly, I saw the fingers broken off as symbolic that God wants us to be his partners in the works of the renewal and restoration of the church in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. I won't reattach those fingers until we have fulfilled that mission."

MISSION HOPE REPORT

In September 2005 Catholic World Mission, launched "Mission Hope," our relief project for the Gulf Coast victims of Hurricane Katrina. So far Mission Hope has raised nearly \$500,000 to touch three areas beyond the current ability of civil agencies:

- Support for 48 displaced New Orleans diocesan priests.
- Funding for over two dozen reconstruction missions through our partnership with "Youth for the Third Millennium."
- Operating funds to help Catholic schools to re-open and absorb thousands of displaced students during the 2005-2006 school year.

Bishop's Mission Territory Still Recovering from Hurricanes

In October 2005, Hurricane Wilma destroyed most of the Catholic parishes in Bishop Pedro Pablo's mission Territory.

The easternmost Mexican state on the Yucatán Peninsula, Quintana Roo, suffered an unprecedented 63 hours of high winds and heavy rain, equivalent to five hurricanes. Hardest hit was the northeast region, home to 75 percent of the state's 1.1 million people and heavily dependent on tourism, especially Cancún. Ninety-eight percent of the hotels sustained damage.

Catholic World Mission and Altius sent volunteers to create a distribution network that was essential to relief efforts. Nearly two-thirds of the

1,367 tons of food, medicine, clothing, bedding, building, and other supplies

The resolve of Bishop Pedro Pablo is to rebuild every destroyed parish with strong buildings that also serve as hurricane shelters for the future.

were channeled through this network. Every night, Bishop Pedro Pablo Elizondo, LC, spoke with nuns, priests, laity, and others to decide the best course of action for the following day. The bishop visited communities daily to determine needs.

Thousands of students assisted, not only with material needs, but by canvassing communities street-by-street, and door-by-door. In this way, 131 communities were assisted. Another mission trip was made in April 2007 and one is planned for November 2007.

In the words of the Bishop, new buildings will "save people's lives and diminish the risk they are confronted with on a yearly basis." The area is vulnerable to about seven hurricanes a year.

Bringing Christ to Remote Areas of Latin America

While Latin American countries include many of the largest Catholic populations in the world, its Constitutions and public life are among the most secular. A typical parish consists of large populations and as many as 20-30 chapels in remote villages throughout vast territorial expanses. In these large parishes several different languages and dialects are spoken by the indigenous people making personal ministry and Catechesis by the limited number of missionary priests exceedingly difficult.

Catholic World Mission's Lay Missionaries or "Evangelizadores" are Catholic Catechists, fully trained in religious instruction for children and adults and paid to work full-time for the Church under the direction of their local priest and bishop.

These lay people are not outsiders, but native to the parishes in which they work and fluent in the local dialect (27 different dialects are spoken among our ETCs), making their Catholic witness tremendously powerful to their neighbors and making it possible for them to train and manage additional volunteer Catechists. Their preparation includes five intensive weeks of study and prayer and continues with one-week semester updates.

Progress and Future Projections Today this project has grown to include over 600 ETCs Working in 58 dioceses. ETCs have trained and manage over 35,000 part-time Catechists, bringing the Gospel to over 2,000,000 people. Our five-year goal is to grow the number of ETCs annually by 7% to total 912 ETCs by 2011.

2007 Holy Week Megamissions

Every year, the ETC evangelizing effort reaches its peak in what is called "Megamissions". Throughout the year thousands of families and young people in four countries are trained for special Holy Week door-to-door missions in the most remote areas of their geography.

Number of towns visited	2,840
Number of missionaries	19,020
Number of families	8,467 aprox.
Number of priests	238
Number of souls reached	127,512
City with the most participants	Mexico City & Tuxtla Gutierrez (Chiapas)



The Legacy of Luis

Luis wasn't sure what being Catholic meant until a Lay Missionary from Catholic World Mission came to his tiny village. Luis starting attending the children's program, received his first communion, and learned more about his Faith.

Luis' simple faith deepened with the help of the Lay Missionary. Excited about his new Faith, he wanted his parents to join him in receiving communion, but they had never been married in the Church. He pushed his parents until they finally did marry in the Church where family and friends witnessed the ceremony.



One day the Missionary announced a Men's Retreat sponsored by CWM. Luis ran home to tell his father, Miguel who was reluctant to go. But, again Luis persisted saying, "Dad, I know you won't let Jesus down." and, that's when Miguel made a promise to Luis to participate in the retreat.

Ten days before the retreat, Luis, Miguel's only son and best friend died. Miguel was devastated, but remembered the promise he made to his little boy.

Miguel went to the retreat and began to experience for himself the power of the Catholic Faith. Inspired by the memory of his son, and his own deepening faith, Miguel decided to become a Lay Missionary.

He attended CWM's training course and now helps to bring the Gospel to other families in rural Mexico.

Miguel fulfilled his promise to Luis. He trusts his son smiles down from heaven as he does God's work here on Earth.



ETC USA – Atlanta

Right now Full-time Lay Missionaries are active in Mexico, Guatemala and Venezuela. But due to the large influx of Hispanic immigrants in the United States, further complicated by the lack of Hispanic clergy to attend their pastoral needs, ETCs have begun their work among this ever-growing flock.



Our Holy Father Benedict XVI underlined the importance of this ministry when he told Alejandro Pinelo (see front cover), the apostolate's director, "Immigrants are a priority for the Church in the USA." Full-time Lay Missionaries hope to meet that priority, just as they have met them in Mexico.

Mano Amiga Schools Help Break the Cycle of Poverty

Education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty in the poorest areas of Latin America. We address this through Catholic education centers we call “Mano Amiga” (“Helping Hand”) schools. These centers start as grade schools and grow as we add middle school, high school, adult education and job training courses for teens and parents alike. In just a few decades, this approach transforms impoverished neighborhoods into middle class communities.



Helping Hands schools focus on completing a high school education, thereby, affording all students college opportunities. We offer instruction in Christian virtues and character development for the whole family as part of a complete Catholic education, strengthening family bonds. And we provide instruction in trades and organizational skills to older students and younger parents.

We currently have 28 schools serving 16,750 students, and by 2015 Mano Amiga schools will be serving 50,000 students!

With a mission to help lift needy families and their children out of poverty, the first Helping Hand School was started in Mexico City in 1963. Its first class consisted of 15 kindergarten boys and girls in two small classrooms, using a blackboard propped up by trash barrels.

Today, Catholic World Mission, supports 28 Helping

Hand schools teaching over 16,000 students in Mexico, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, and Colombia. Our most recent addition is a school in Itapeperica, Brazil (near Sao Paulo). Helping Hand students regularly attain the top scores in regional and national tests, helping them to qualify for college scholarships and financial aid, proving the value of an integral Catholic education.

Your Mano Amiga Graduates

Gabriella Navarro received a scholarship for higher education at the University of Monterrey. She graduated from the Monterrey Mano Amiga School just six months ago. Her father is a carpenter and her mother works as household help. She also has a 13 year old sister who attends the Mano Amiga Middle School.

Gabriella now affirms that, for her, Mano Amiga represents love, support, opportunities, knowledge, and respect.

Sergio tells us that all he is today, he is because of Mano Amiga Schools. “More than liking it, I feel that it changed me as a person, it formed in me a lifestyle,” Sergio says. As a former student of Mano Amiga Zomeyucan he is very proud that he is now Vice-Principal of his own Middle school.

“I would like to tell those sponsors who think of their help as nothing more than financial assistance that they are truly transforming people’s lives.” “And who better to affirm this than someone who’s life has been changed.”



Ryan Flood, Director of Catholic World Mission

I began my “mission” at Catholic World Mission in October of 2006. It is very exciting to work for such a vibrant dynamic organization that is doing so much to help the poor, not only in body, but in spirit. We strive for the long-term transformation of poverty by alleviating immediate physical suffering and by helping the poor provide for themselves in this life and grow in holiness to reap the eternal reward in heaven!

My previous work has been in the area of Planned Giving and Major Gifts in which I worked 7 years for the Legionaries of Christ. I truly enjoyed my time with the Legion and have many fond memories of the benefactors, priests and seminarians. When I’m not working with CWM I enjoy spending time outdoors with my wife and five children (ages 6-3months).

Are you ready for a mission?

In 2005 and 2006 our family participated in two Megamissions. These missions take place each Holy Week throughout the world (see page 4 for our 2007 update). The aims of these missions are to invite people back to Mass and the Sacraments as well as helping others to understand the Catholic Faith better. In April 2005 I heard a priest give a homily on how important it was to evangelize our culture, a culture that is becoming more secular by the day. He said, “Christ died for us during this week; what better way to spend our Holy Week than bringing the Good News to our most needy brothers and sisters.” These words cut right to my heart, I went home and proposed the idea to my family, they seemed both a little apprehensive as well as excited – we went in a spirit of Faith. Despite our 2 year old walking on a few flower beds, we participated each day and had a great time. We encouraged Catholics to get more involved at their parish, we helped non-Catholics to understand the Catholic faith better and yes, we even had a few doors slammed in our faces. We had a new baby in 2007 so we did not participate. We are all looking forward to Megamissions 2008.

You can read more about Megamissions 2007 on page 4 of our newsletter. Thank you again for all you do to help support our vital mission of conquering poverty with the richness of our Catholic Faith. I look forward to serving you in any capacity I can. Please call or write anytime (800) 961-1853.

Ryan T. Flood
Director, Catholic World Mission

The Incredible Power of an Education

Last January, I was admitted to the intensive care unit at San Jose Hospital in Monterrey, Mexico. A highly respected surgeon concluded that I needed double bypass surgery. After the procedure, the surgeon visited me with a second surgeon whom I had not yet met.



Fr. James McKenna with Dr. Jose Antonio Heredia.

This younger physician introduced himself as Dr. Antonio Heredia. Recognizing my name, he asked, “Do you know the Helping Hand school?” I replied, “Of course, I was its first principal.” “We spoke often about you,” he said. “I was one of the first students at Helping Hand.”

I was filled with emotion and reminisced about those first months of the foundation of the Mano Amiga Institute in 1974; the poverty of the children, our hope and belief in the school’s potential to change their lives. Now, thirty years later, one of those same children was a cardiovascular surgeon directly involved in saving my life!

My involvement in the foundation of Helping Hand was one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life. Most of the people in the community lived without electricity or running water. Their lives were full of misery and poverty: foul smelling and contaminated water, shacks made of cardboard, unpaved streets, and barely-clothed children running through the neighborhoods. Upon learning about plans for the school, one man looked

at me and replied, “We have been promised so many things.”

The school’s mission was to lift children out of poverty and transform them into leaders in the community. We began the first year in an eight-classroom building. Most children wore tattered clothing and without shoes. Within a week, half of the teachers and the vice principal resigned. We moved ahead and by the second month one hundred and twenty students had enrolled. Uniforms were sold for 50 cents. The care with which the students treated their new clothes was incredible!


Using an old typewriter, we wrote letters to parents, inviting them to a meeting with their child’s teacher and me. Not one parent ever missed an appointment. For some, that meant foregoing a half-day’s work. The parents were astounded by and grateful for the way we treated them. No one had ever spoken so positively with them about their children, nor taken an interest in their children’s lives. The mothers shared their difficulties. One mother asked me if the school would stop requiring her son to play sports. She explained that he was often weak because she did not have enough food to feed him every morning. Her husband had left her and their four children, two of whom had disabilities. Another instance that had a profound impact on me was at a school party when a second-grade child came running to show me a sandwich and exclaimed, “Look, it has meat in it! I am going to take it home and give it to my mother!”

After that first year, I took a position as the principal of another school. Nine years later, I returned to visit Helping Hand. The area was unrecognizable. Not only were there cement houses, electricity and running water, but also neighborhoods,

shopping centers, and businesses. The construction of the school, with all of the additions had been completed.

After I first left the Helping Hand Institute, an impoverished child named Antonio Heredia enrolled in the school. Thirty years later, Dr. Jose Antonio Heredia recounted to me the positive experiences that he had as a student. He now has his own practice in a prestigious medical center and is considered to be one of the best young cardiovascular surgeons in Monterrey.

Antonio has maintained his involvement in Helping Hand and supports its programs. He said that it was gratifying to operate on me, as he felt it was an opportunity to express his gratitude for what he had received from Helping Hand.



“I put Catholic World Mission in my Will. It was my way of making a difference.”

Please contact us at:
1-203-848-3329.
God bless you.

Our legal title is:
Catholic World Mission, Incorporated

How You Can Help – Child Sponsorship Program



Mano Amiga “Helping Hand” Schools

Our sponsorship program works in conjunction with Mano Amiga “Helping Hand” Schools to support students in 28 elementary and high schools throughout seven Latin American countries (*Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, El Salvador, Argentina, and Colombia*). As a sponsor, you are matched with a specific child, age 4-17, who is in need of a scholarship in order to attend school. Each child pays a part of his tuition based on what the family can afford. The amazing statistic is that over 85% of Mano Amiga graduates go on to technical school, and in some cases even University.

Helping Hands Schools:

- Provide Pre-K through high school education, making college studies possible for all their students
- Offer Catholic education and faith activities for the whole family
- Teach Christian virtues and character development, strengthening family bonds
- Provide instruction in trades and organizational skills to older students and younger parents

28 Mano Amiga schools currently serve over 16,000 students, seven additional schools are slated to open in 2008. By 2015 Catholic World Mission’s goal is to be serving 50,000 students!

Sponsor a Child Today: *Help a needy child enroll in a Helping Hand School for a year or more...*

Total Sponsorships Worldwide – 7,597*

Total Children Still in Waiting to be Sponsored – 9,153*

*As of April 31, 2007

Funding and Scholarship Opportunities:

- Full annual scholarship \$650 per student (\$65.00 per month)
- Half annual scholarship \$325 per student (\$32.50 per month)

Each Sponsor will receive:

- Introductory Information Package (*includes child’s name, birth date, grade & short profile*)
- Your Sponsored Child’s Progress Report (*each January*)
- Your Sponsored Child’s Report Card (*each June*)

Please contact: **CATHOLIC WORLD MISSION**, 33 ROSSOTTO DRIVE, HAMDEN, CT 06410, 1-800-961-8153
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