

TSSF Medical Mission Fund Update

David Lawson-Beck (Committee Secretary)



Left, Students at St. Agnes Elementary School, one of the Liberian Bohalun schools supported by the TSSF Medical Mission Fund, queue for snacks.

Below, TSSF Medical Mission Fund-sponsored nursing students at Phebe Hospital, one of Liberia's oldest and most highly regarded hospitals. Ebola decimated the ranks of medical personnel, including nurses, during the 2014-16 epidemic.

In 2017, Chapter voted to bring the former Challoner Fund, which supported the wonderful work of Dr. Kathryn Challoner, TSSF, into a more integrated relationship with the Order in our Province. The decision also was made to widen the scope of the new TSSF Medical Mission Fund to make it more flexible in addressing disaster relief issues. Also, at the suggestion of Dr. Challoner, it was decided to offer more support to SSF First Order activities related to the Fund's scope.

For many years, Dr. Challoner has given her time, talents and money to provide disaster relief in Liberia, where the Ebola crisis infected an estimated 10,678 persons and killed an estimated 4,810 of them in the 2014-2016 period. The epidemic also decimated the ranks of medical personnel, created countless orphans and put a strain on health facilities, particularly those in remote areas. This was on top of two civil wars (approximately 1989-1996 and 1997-2003) that destroyed/degraded health facilities and schools.

In the past, our Province has helped channel funds to the Liberian Bohalun Mission schools (St. Agnes Elementary school, St. Cyprian Junior High School and St. Augustine Senior High School) and St. Anthony Health Center (associated facilities serving Ebola orphans and others near the Ebola epicenter); to the Phebe Hospital, one of Liberia's oldest and most highly regarded hospitals; and to other crucial facilities in Liberia and other African countries. We also have sponsored nursing students at Cuttington University in Morovia, Liberia, an Episcopal-Anglican institution, to help "fill in the ranks" of nurses killed by Ebola, and have met emergency needs such as a sudden shortage of African snake antivenin when the main supplier went out of business and an alternative source had to be found.

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In 2017-2018, under the direction of Minister Provincial Janet Fedders and a new MMF Fund Committee, nursing scholarships were continued at Cuttington for two students, Ms. Mamie Tomah and Ms. Theresa Kanneh, and we supported a post-hurricane relief trip to Arecibo, Puerto Rico, August 12-18, which included EMT medical personnel, volunteer rebuilding workers, two OSF Brothers and two SSF First Order Brothers, Damien Joseph and Thomas (we paid for the SSF brothers' transportation, and made a contribution for supplies). OSF Brother David Rutledge coordinated the effort.

The MMF Committee consists of David Lawson-Beck (Committee Secretary), Lance Renault, Jonathan Lloyd, Jonathan Steinhart and Dominic George. Members communicate by telephone, email, texting and participation in Zoom conferences. ♦



The TSSF Medical Mission Fund also supported a post-hurricane relief mission to Arecibo in August 2017, in part to help build a relationship with the Diocese of Puerto Rico.

Below, Volunteers repaired homes damaged by Hurricane Maria during a 2017 mission trip supported by the TSSF MMF.

