



THE AFRICA REPORT

MISSION IS A MUTUAL GIFT

Father Barthelemy Bazemo, M.Afr.
Provincial of the Americas and President of the Missionaries of Africa, Inc.

You may have heard the expression “reverse missionary.” It is a casual term people use when a priest, brother, or sister from a country once considered a mission territory is now serving in a country that historically sent missionaries abroad. You may have experienced this yourself, perhaps attending Mass celebrated by an African priest in your own parish. I write to you today as part of that reality.

The Missionaries of Africa are preparing to take responsibility for Saint-Roch Church in Quebec City. For us, this is not simply another pastoral assignment. It is a visible sign of how the Holy Spirit continues to work in the Church.

Saint-Roch is the largest church in Quebec City, located in a neighborhood along the St. Lawrence River once home to shipyards and working-class Catholic families. The current church was built in 1811, its vast stone walls still speaking of faith and sacrifice. Yet the parish declined. The last full-time priest left 30 years ago, and in recent years only one Mass a week was celebrated there. That chapter is now ending.

When the Missionaries of Africa first came to the Americas in 1901, we came to Quebec first. From here, vocations flourished. Hundreds of Quebecois priests and brothers joined our society and left their homeland to serve in Africa. They built parishes, opened schools, and helped establish strong local Churches. Some of those missionaries are still living today, having given their lives entirely to the people of Africa. That generosity is not forgotten.

The Missionaries of Africa have always maintained a few parishes outside Africa, especially in places where our missionaries come from and where faithful Catholics support our work. These communities are signs of gratitude and communion, reminding us that mission is a mutual gift.

When the Archdiocese of Quebec reached out for help, our leadership in Rome responded clearly. You helped us. Now we are here to help you. We are honored to serve the Church in Quebec.

Most active Missionaries of Africa today are African. The Church in Quebec now includes many newcomers, especially from Africa and Latin America. Recent immigration has brought a rise in baptisms and church attendance, renewing parish life and increasing membership, particularly among young adults.



Saint-Roch Church, Quebec City. Pictured left to right: Brother André Savard; Brother Denis Walsh; Father Jean-Paul Guibila; Father André Bilodeau; Bishop Jean Tailleux, Auxiliary Bishop of Quebec; Father Serge St-Arneault; Father Michael Côté; and Archdiocesan Chancellor Father Abbot Serge D. Tidjani. Brother Walsh and Fathers Guibila and St-Arneault form the new pastoral team at the parish.



Saint-Roch already houses a homeless shelter and several community organizations in its basement. The church stands in a neighborhood marked by both renewal and poverty. This is familiar ground for us. Our charism has always been to build communities of faith and serve those in greatest need.

What some call reverse mission is simply the Church living her catholicity. The Gospel once traveled from Quebec to Africa through generous missionaries. Today it returns through African missionaries formed in the faith that Quebec helped to nurture. This is not a reversal. It is the fruit of seeds planted more than a century ago.

Mission is a mutual gift, and we are grateful to live that gift today.

WIAGA, GHANA RENOVATIONS SAVE CONVENT

The Sisters of Mary Immaculate in northern Ghana are rebuilding their convent thanks to donors of the Missionaries of Africa. Years of rain caused severe water damage, making a full roof replacement necessary. The grant also funded new electrical wiring, complete bathroom renovations, and repairs to ceilings and walls. Superior Sr. Agatha Zumbome reports the builders are finishing, and soon Most Rev. Ignatius Anipu, M.Afr., will celebrate a homecoming Mass. The restored convent ensures the sisters can continue serving the people of Wiaga.

New roof trusses will end years of leaks at the Sisters' convent in Wiaga, Ghana.



POPE LEO XIV TO JOURNEY TO AFRICA



Pope Leo XIV will make a ten-day Apostolic Journey to Africa, April 13–23, visiting Algeria, Cameroon, Angola, and Equatorial Guinea. Walking in the footsteps of Saint Augustine in Annaba, the Holy Father will also meet communities in Yaoundé, Luanda, and Malabo. The journey will focus on solidarity with the poor, reconciliation, and peace across the continent.

Credit: Fabrizio Maffei / Shutterstock.com

U.S. AND AFRICAN BISHOPS CALL FOR HOPE

The bishops of the United States and Africa and Madagascar have issued *Brothers and Sisters in Hope*, a joint statement calling for deeper solidarity and shared commitment to human dignity, justice, and development between the United States and African nations. In the document they write, “integral human development – the development of every person and the whole person, especially of the poorest and most neglected in the community – is at the very heart of evangelization.”

The statement affirms that international assistance “is an important means of promoting human dignity, protecting human life, and pursuing the international common good,” and stresses that the Church and state alike must safeguard the vulnerable while building local capacity rooted in respect for community values.

The bishops also highlight the gifts the U.S. and African Churches share, noting, “The faithful of the U.S. and Africa are gifts to one another,” and call for “robust lifesaving and life-affirming U.S. assistance... grounded in thoughtful partnership,” accompanied by prayer for deeper bonds of fraternity.

A link to the full statement is available at MissionariesofAfrica.org. The statement is available in English, French, and Portuguese.



Bishop Stephen Dami Mamza of Yola, Nigeria, and First Vice President of SECAM, served as homilist at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Mass for Solidarity with the Bishops and Faithful of Africa on February 4, 2026, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Credit: Catholic Standard photo by Mihoko Owada

ANGOROM, UGANDA

GOATS AND SHEEP STRENGTHEN A GROWING COMMUNITY



Facing food shortages in their convent, the Medical Mission Sisters Formation House in northern Uganda chose a practical path toward self-reliance. With support from the Missionaries of Africa, they launched a goat and sheep project to provide food for incoming sisters and generate modest income.

The community built shelters, purchased ten goats and ten sheep, and organized shared daily care. Within months, results are clear: two goats are expectant and several sheep are ready for breeding, strong signs of steady growth.

Founded in 1925 in Washington, D.C., the Medical Mission Sisters are seeing rising vocations in Africa while continuing medical outreach across East Africa. This livestock project now strengthens both their dinner table and their mission.

New goats arrive at the Medical Mission Sisters Formation House in Uganda, helping strengthen food security and long-term sustainability for the growing community of sisters.

SAGA, NIGER

SOLAR BRINGS NEW ACTIVITIES AND SAFETY

The parish community of St. Joseph in Saga, just outside Niamey along the Niger River, is experiencing renewed energy thanks to a newly installed solar power system. In a country where electricity is unreliable, frequent outages once disrupted meetings, youth programs, and catechesis. Planning gatherings without dependable lights, fans, or sound systems made ministry difficult.

That has changed. Father Patrice Belem of the Missionaries of Africa said the parish had continuous electricity during the recent school holidays, allowing them to organize activities that help young people. Reliable power now supports evening programs, provides relief during extreme heat, keeps equipment functioning, preserves supplies, and improves security through outdoor lighting after dark.

In Niger, where only about 2 percent of the population is Christian, St. Joseph serves a small but committed community. The new solar system brings stability, safety, and renewed confidence for the parish and its youth.



The Archbishop of Niamey, Most Rev. Djalwana Laurent Lompo, meets with young people at St. Joseph Parish during school holiday programming made possible by solar power.

NAIROBI, KENYA

FROM AN OLD WELL TO A HIGH-CAPACITY WATER SOURCE



In the northeastern section of Nairobi, an existing borehole in Kasarani has been upgraded to serve thousands of people each day. The Little Sisters of St. Francis knew their well had strong potential but lacked the equipment to operate at full capacity. A grant administered through the Missionaries of Africa in the United States funded a submersible pump, piping, storage tanks, and electrical work.

The system now produces about 15,000 gallons of clean water daily. In an area where city water service is unreliable and families rely on costly vendors, this steady supply ensures dependable access. Sr. Esther Waithira, LSOSF, says the pump fills the tanks continuously, allowing thousands to draw water each day. This project did not drill a new well but unlocked the capacity of an existing one and turned it into sustained daily impact.

Workers install a submersible pump in the existing well in Kasarani. The electric pump was the key to transforming a convent well into a reliable water source for the wider community.

FAITH BEYOND POLITICS

Several donors have asked about tensions between the United States government and certain countries in Africa. These situations can be concerning, but politics does not define our work. The Gospel does.

The Missionaries of Africa are the largest Catholic congregation devoted to Africa and its people. Our members serve in 26 African countries, offering faithful, long-term missionary service rooted in prayer, service, and solidarity. Our missionaries serve everyone in need.

Beyond our members, we support the growth of the Catholic Church across Africa. The Church is vibrant and expanding, filled with hope. Seminaries are full, parishes are growing, and lay leaders are stepping forward. The faith is alive and strong.

This vision reflects the spirit of the bishops' document *Brothers and Sisters in Hope*, which you can read more about on page 2 of this newsletter.

What we do is simple. American Catholics stand with African Catholics as brothers and sisters in Christ. The Church knows no borders. We are one Body, one faith, one mission, building the faith across oceans and cultures, united in Christ.



Visiting friends in Ngong, Kenya.

WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION . . .

- Join our Friends of Hope monthly giving plan.
- Make a Memorial Gift in memory of a loved one.
- Celebrate a birthday, wedding or anniversary with a donation to our works in Africa.
- Donations of stock, securities, bonds or annuities provide the same benefit as a cash gift.
- Life Insurance: consider naming the Missionaries of Africa as a beneficiary.
- Bequests: an estate gift to support the ongoing work of the Missionaries of Africa.

Charitable IRA Transfers

Donors age 70 1/2 or older can transfer a contribution each year directly from a traditional IRA account. This may satisfy a portion or all of the annual required minimum distribution (RMD) and serve as a qualified charitable distribution for your IRA, which can decrease your tax burden even if you are no longer itemizing deductions.*

**** Always consult your tax preparer for your state regulations.***

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Development Office
1622 21st Street, NW
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For more information, call us at: 877-523-4662

or visit: www.missionariesofafrica.org or email: info@missionariesofafrica.org

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