

Annual Report

August 1, 2017– July 31, 2018

Assistance to the Mercy Project in Kenya



Message from Sr. Rose

This 2017-2018 year has come so fast and we have enjoyed a solid year of building and growing our services at the Mother of Mercy Girls School and Project in Lare, Kenya. The Mercy Girls School is becoming very well known.

This year we continue close cooperation and partnership with Commissioned by Christ of the Arlington Diocese in Virginia. The mission trip hosted 21 volunteers from all over the U.S., eager to help us with our painting of new classrooms and digging of holes for the installation of water tanks to the new dorms. This program brings us closer to Christ and towards building a deeper friendship with the U.S. Communities. We are happy to share the work of the missionaries in this report and extend or continued thanks to all involved through in Kenya.

I am happy to share this report about the actual progress we made in completing the dormitory for all students, starting the computer and science labs and bringing water for the new structures.

Thank you so much for supporting the mission and vision of the Mercy Project and for the friendship that you demonstrate towards our community in Lare, Kenya.

With my deepest thanks and prayers for continued support in the years to come,



Sr. Rose Wangui, VHM

Founder, Mercy Center Foundation, USA

The Mercy Center Foundation, USA seeks to provide the Lare community in Kenya with international, humanitarian and technical assistance to support access to clean water, a basic health care clinic and a girl's secondary school which assists more than 300 girls to attain a high school education. The work of the Mercy Project also directly impacts the lives of villagers and has dramatically improved their future opportunities for a better life. Previously excluded from going to school, girls (ages 13-20) are doing well in school and approximately 75% are attending universities and colleges upon completion. The school is now ranked fourth in the district of Njoro in Nakuru County. These are enormous steps since opening our doors with one classroom in 2011.

The Mother of Mercy Girls School employs fourteen full time teachers, and three security guards, three cooks, a nurse and lab technician for the health clinic, a driver, two farm hands, a secretary and Principal of the School. A Mercy Project Manager directly oversees the implementation and operations of the Secondary School, the farm project and the health clinic.

[**Report on Project Activities**](#)

[**Second Missionary Trip to Lare, Kenya in July 2018**](#)

Our main efforts in 2017-2018 focused on fundraising and building a supportive relationship with Commissioned by Christ which is a Catholic, lay organization that supports short term international mission trips. Many of the missionaries are from the Arlington Diocese in Virginia. This year CBC sent a second missionary team to Kenya. The team led by Caroline Duffy and Fr. Jeb Donlin brought 21 missionaries to help build and construct the new girls' dormitory. The group focused on light painting and construction needs in the classrooms of the school. They had a full schedule daily with mass and prayer and reflections at the end of the ten-day program.



Pictured above is the 2018 Commissioned by Christ Kenya Mission team.

The missionaries focused their mornings on painting classrooms, renovating the garden areas around the school and supporting the new building efforts underway to bring water to the dormitory and the start of a science lab.



CBC volunteers also moved the girls from classrooms to the newly built dormitories on the Mercy Secondary School Campus. The students had been living in the thirteen classrooms until the new dormitory was completed in 2018.

Fr. Jeb Donelan and Tom Pedagno are pictured above ---and led the effort with the volunteers to move the girls into their new dorm. So many of the volunteers loved this part of the journey because we were directly helping girls to settle in and become a real part of the new Mercy Girls School community.



CBC volunteers were moving beds to dorms, hauling cement for the foundation of the new Science lab. Other volunteers painted classrooms and dormitories and dug foundations for new water and garden systems. “Basically, whatever we were asked to do we did it together in the spirit of Christian cooperation and love and we tried to reach out to the girls to let them know that we support their efforts to go to school,” said Caroline Duffy, a teacher from Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria, Virginia.



In the daytime, everyone works hard, and, in the evening, there were deliberations, reflections, singing and discussions among all who wished to participate. A joint mass was celebrated during the mission trip with the Kenyans and Americans in the newly built dining hall. “We were so moved by the experience” and “many have volunteered to lead some fundraising efforts in their communities upon their return home,” said Fr. Jeb Donelan.

Many students on the trip were able to get to know one another and began to understand the Kenya experience from the position of the students there. Strong bonds of friendship developed as several of the participants returned to the U.S. with a renewed enthusiasm for the opportunity to meet the girls and faculty at the Mercy Girls School. Many described the experience as providing an opportunity to learn more about ourselves and our responsibility of faith and service to others by volunteering in Kenya.

Another mission trip now scheduled for July 5-16, 2019 will assist with the major construction and completion of the science lab planned for this year. The lab will consist of four parts for students learning biology, chemistry, physics and agriculture. Currently, the school is ranked fourth in the Njoro district of Nakuru and is seeking to improve each year. “The addition of modern high school classrooms, well equipped and staffed programs, combined with great teachers and students will certainly place us in a top position in future,” says Sr. Rose, VHM.



Pictured are Monica Pedagno and Caroline Duffy from the 2018 CBC trip with some of the Mercy Girls expressing and sending “peace” to all.

The Mercy Board expresses its deepest gratitude to the 2018 CBC missionaries and the Arlington Diocese for its dedication and very hard work.

In late 2017, the Mercy Project applied for and received approval from the Conrad Hilton Fund for Religious Sisters for the purchase of 15 computers and two printers for a mini-computer lab to support students. The project began in early 2018, and current classroom space will support the new computer lab. Their wish is to help to expand it in future as it will allow advanced IT programs and electives to be taught in 2019. Students can now prepare appropriately for future college level course requirement programs with the added new computer courses.

In addition to the Conrad Hilton Foundation, the Mercy Project received a \$12,000 project support grant from the Talitha Cumi Foundation towards the start of a new science lab project. These grants supplemented donor and event income for the year and fulfilled specific short-term needs of the school.

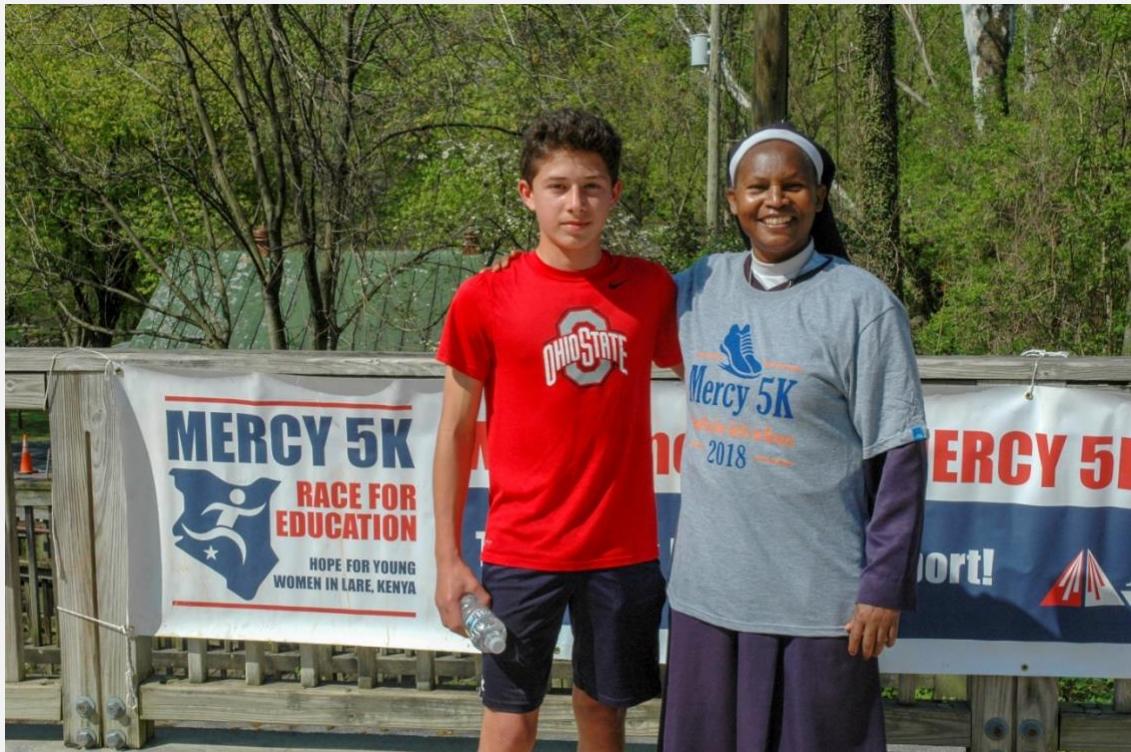
[Dining Hall Updates](#)

In 2018, Kenyatta Dining Hall was completed and furniture for the hall was purchased with assistance from Cathy O'Brien, a supporter from Philadelphia who raised \$8,500 from her community of supporters in order to ensure that the dining hall would be a welcoming and multi-purpose room for the girls. Cathy visited Kenya in 2017 on the first group of missionaries from the USA and saw the need to assist the girls and give back as a priority. "With leadership from people like Cathy O'Brien and donors who consisted of friends and family and co-workers from the hospital in Philadelphia --the Mercy Project was able to fulfill needs and complete this modernization project as part of her own way of giving back to the importance of this work in Kenya," said Brian Doherty, President of the Mercy Center Foundation. Other dedicated volunteers suggested visiting again and working on a spiritual retreat for the girls. Many good returns are coming back from the CBC trips to Kenya.

The Mercy Project welcomes all individual and group initiatives to assist Sr. Rose in achieving her goals.

M5K10K

Stand Up For Girls in Kenya



“Sr. Rose loves the Charity Race Events because they demonstrate how much people are giving back and bring us closer together.”

The Mercy Center Foundation is proud to report that more than 120 runners joined us for the 2018 Mercy 5k Race for Girls Education in Kenya held each year in the spring. The race attracts new supporters, runners and citizens from all over the area. We were so pleased to have the wonderful music talent of Bach2Rock and their talented young musicians who offered great entertainment which followed the race! With wonderful support from the race sponsors

including ETS, Georgetown Running Company, Saxby's, ULLICO, Bach2Rock, the Bricklayers International Union, De Carlos Studios, Soft Edge, Down Dog Yoga, Barrel Oak Winery and the local community, we raised \$14,500k for dormitory construction.

The Mercy Board is grateful to all of the girls in the Haruma Club at Georgetown Visitation and their parents for their generosity and volunteerism.

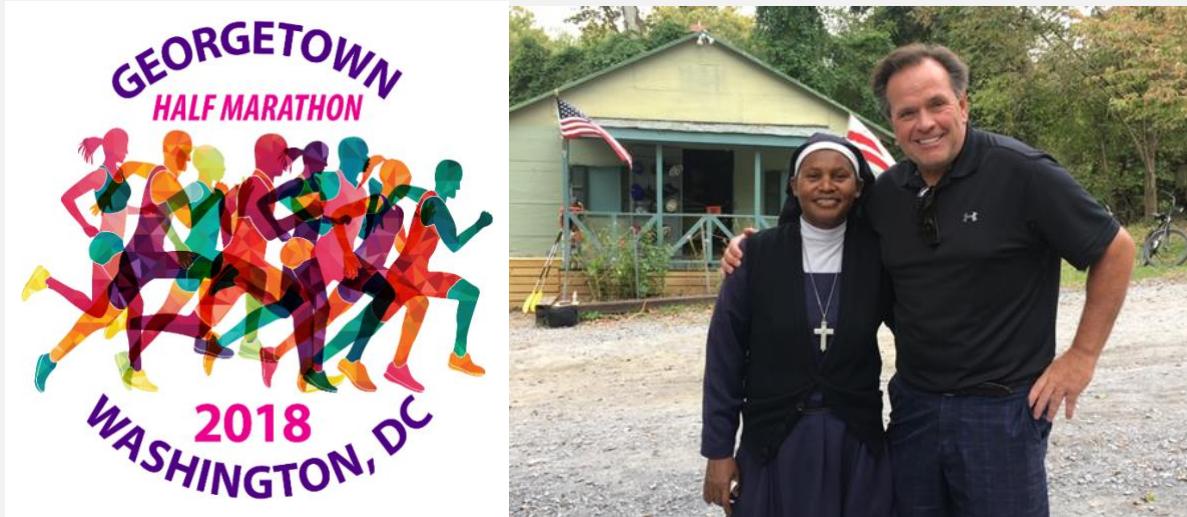
Girls, we simply could not have done the race without all of you and the larger community! Thank you all!



Georgetown Half Marathon – at Fletcher's Cove raised 40k

for Kenya and Nepal

Partnering with Kaimont, LLC and the Safety and Health Foundation, the Mercy Project hosted its second half marathon to support girls' education in Kenya and in Nepal. Kaimont, LLC, headed by Monika Paris is also supporting girls' education, girls' empowerment and healthy lifestyles for girls in Nepal. The half marathon was a very successful event and brought more than 400 runners! The leading corporate and organization sponsors were ETS Inc., Georgetown Running Co., InQuisIT, Bricklayers Int'l Union, the Union Labor Life Insurance Co., Georgetown Visitation and DeCarlo Studios.



Edward W. Vaughan, CEO of ETS Corp., a leading sponsor of all the charity races for the past six years is with Sr. Rose at the 2018 Georgetown Half.

Additionally, our runners received great in-kind donations and awards from Down Dog Yoga, Barrel Oak Winery, Balducci's, Saxby's Coffee and Patagonia. The awards are given to male/female winners in age group categories.

These races have prompted a lot of enthusiasm and support and will continue in future. The events have become our annual tradition and many now look forward to each year with the support of the broader United States and friends of Sr. Rose and those interested in the cause of supporting girls' education. We are pleased to continue this in 2019 with the M5k10k in Spring 2019 and the third Georgetown Half on October 12, 2019.

[Financial Report](#)

The Mercy Center Foundation, USA undergoes financial reviews or audits each year and continues to be an organization in good standing. The board meets regularly to address the ongoing issues and projects as well as fundraising plans of the Foundation. Our financial statements for the period ending July 31, 2018 can be found on our website under the donate button.

The Mercy Center Foundation, USA supports a fully transparent and accountable approach towards financing of the Mercy Project. We do this by encouraging volunteerism and partnerships with other like-minded companies, organizations and donors.

[**Looking Ahead to 2018-2019**](#)

The Mercy Center Foundation has accomplished much in this past year, and we continue to try to respond to the most critical needs arising in Kenya. In the first part of 2019, the foundation will raise funds towards completion of science labs for chemistry/biology and physics/agriculture programs planned. The Mother of Mercy Girls School is attracting serious students each year, building a foundation and strong tradition of empowering girls in Kenya to achieve their dreams.

A new modern science lab --- will provide updated new practical lab spaces needed to inspire girls for their future science careers. The school is working on acquiring modern learning tools, updated study areas and space so that girls can be inspired to work together more cooperatively and to build strong bonds of friendship and a culture of serious learning. These kinds of positive changes that impact the culture of the school are important and will sustain them long after they graduate from high school. Currently, there are girls from so many different tribes in Kenya working together at the school and learning the spirit of cooperation.

We will also seek to improve and advance the school's plan to become self-sustainable over the long term, by providing continued support for micro-enterprise programs focused on agrobusiness farming and skills training. These programs will help support their independence and strengthen their ability to support their own administrative budget and school programs.

We also welcome your ideas and volunteer service and support for our fundraising efforts. A special thanks to Georgetown Visitation for its help with this project including the *Haruma Club* student and parent volunteers.

Thank you for standing up for girls in Kenya and for sharing this project with your friends, family and colleagues. We ask you to step forward and get involved and

help Sr. Rose continue to fulfill her dream of quality education for girls in Kenya. We can all change the world if we work together and continue the spirit of cooperation that has brought us this far.

Mercy Center Foundation, USA

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Please visit us at www.mercyproject.org

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We are a 501c3 organization and all donations are tax exempt. Tax id: 54-2124269