

Pittsburgh priest returns to Chimbote

Supporting the Chimbote mission has become a way of life for Fr. Albin McGinnis, pastor of Our Lady of Joy Parish in Holiday Park. This summer, he plans to take three of his parishioners with him as he visits the parish in Peru he served from 2001-2003.

Though he had extensive experience in other South American missions, Fr. McGinnis said his first exposure to the people of Chimbote came when he visited the mission with Msgr. John Kozar, former head of the Diocese of Pittsburgh's Mission Office and current National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States.

When his parish assignment in the diocese ended, he said, he asked to be

able to serve at the mission. In Peru, he served a parish about 30 minutes from the city in one of the developing pueblos.

He continued his relationship with the parish after his time there and has returned every summer since. This summer, he says that he and his parishioners will help the parish in its pastoral ministry. Though the language barrier is difficult, Fr. McGinnis believes that the experience will offer them invaluable exposure to the needs of the people of Chimbote.

"It was a phenomenal experience," he said. "You are living among the poorest of the poor, but there is a real joy in them. They teach you more about living than you will ever know."

Mark your calendar...

Chimbote Benefit Golf Outing

May 31, 2005
Edgewood Country Club

See the enclosed flyer for more information.

41st Peru Mission Dinner

October 27, 2005
Sheraton Station Square

For information call 412.456.3085

The Chimbote Foundation

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The Chimbote Foundation

"...a bridge of love and hope."

Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh

"It is a spirit of Christ that is passed on to us through the Gospels that motivates us to reach out to the poorest of the poor, whether it be here in Pittsburgh or as far away as Chimbote."

— Bishop Donald Wuerl

Catholic schools continue to support Chimbote mission

Students from across the diocese have opened their hearts to the Chimbote mission. Here is an update of some of their many efforts.



CHIMBOTE AMBASSADORS: From left, Fr. Hugh Lang, Evan Sargo, Mike Clark, Ryan Brennan and Michael Voit.

St. Therese of Lisieux School, Munhall

Since representatives from 109 diocesan elementary schools attended the kickoff event of the Chimbote Mission Ambassadors program last October, students from around the diocese have been bridging the gap between the children of southwestern Pennsylvania and the children of Peru.

Ryan Brennan, Michael Voit and Evan Sargo of St. Therese School in Munhall have had an excellent year of representing the people of Chimbote to their school and encouraging their peers to support the mission.

Motivated to come back to St. Therese and tell others about the poverty in Chimbote, they visited each classroom in their school to tell about the poverty in Chimbote and

invited Mike Clark of WTAE-TV, who produced an award-winning documentary on his trip to the mission, and Fr. Hugh Lang to St. Therese School to talk to the students about Chimbote.

In addition, they encouraged students at their school to donate to two fundraisers that raised \$1494.66 for the mission.

According to their principal, Sr. Eileen Johnston, the three seventh graders hope to continue encouraging others to support the mission, and they want to be ambassadors next year, too.

Schools continued from front page

Word of God School, Swissvale

For students at Word of God School, Peru isn't just a name from social studies or Spanish classes. It's a very real destination, where students connect with the lives of children who need help.

For many years, students have been involved in a variety of activities to support mission efforts around the world. First graders collect canceled stamps that are used by the retired Sisters of Charity to provide financial support for missions, for instance, and the preschool has gathered basic school supplies for young children in Uganda. There is also an annual card party to benefit the works of the Korean Sisters of Charity.

The Chimbote mission, however, has a special place in the students' hearts. The Word of God Service Organization has sponsored car washes, bake sales, dress-down days, Black and Gold Day, and candy cane sales in order to raise money to support the diocesan hospital and clinics in Chimbote.

Students from preschool through eighth grade continue to live out their faith by giving both their prayers and their financial support to the mission. The awareness that they have gained from this project continues to enrich the children of Word of God Catholic School as they begin to give back some of the blessings that they have received.

St. Alphonsus School, Wexford

During this year's Catholic Schools Week, students at St. Alphonsus School came together to support the Chimbote mission.

On February 3 and 4, students in kindergarten through fourth grade raised money through a carnival, and for the first time, students in fifth through eighth grades participated in a bingo event. A bake sale completed the fundraiser.

All in all, the students raised \$1,126 for the mission.

Congratulations to St. Alphonsus School and all of the schools who work so hard to support the diocese's mission in Peru. Thank you for your help!

Helping in Focus...

The following list offers a glimpse of how your generosity translates into care for God's children.

\$14,000 operates Medical Clinic for one week

\$6,000 operates Well Baby Clinic for one month

\$3,000 underwrites the cost of vaccinations administered during an average week

\$1,500 operates Outpatient First Aid Treatment Unit for one month

\$750 provides a month's worth of medical treatment for high-risk newborns



\$3 pays for a year's worth of essential vitamin and mineral supplements for a malnourished child

\$300 underwrites cost of ultrasound tests administered during an average week

\$150 underwrites cost of Electronic Fetal Monitoring tests for one month

\$75 underwrites cost of medicine, supplies and labor used in Clinic for one hour

\$40 underwrites cost of medical treatment for 10 people during an average day

\$20 underwrites the cost of medical treatment for 5 people during an average week

Please use the envelope provided with this newsletter to make your donation. Thank you.

April 2005



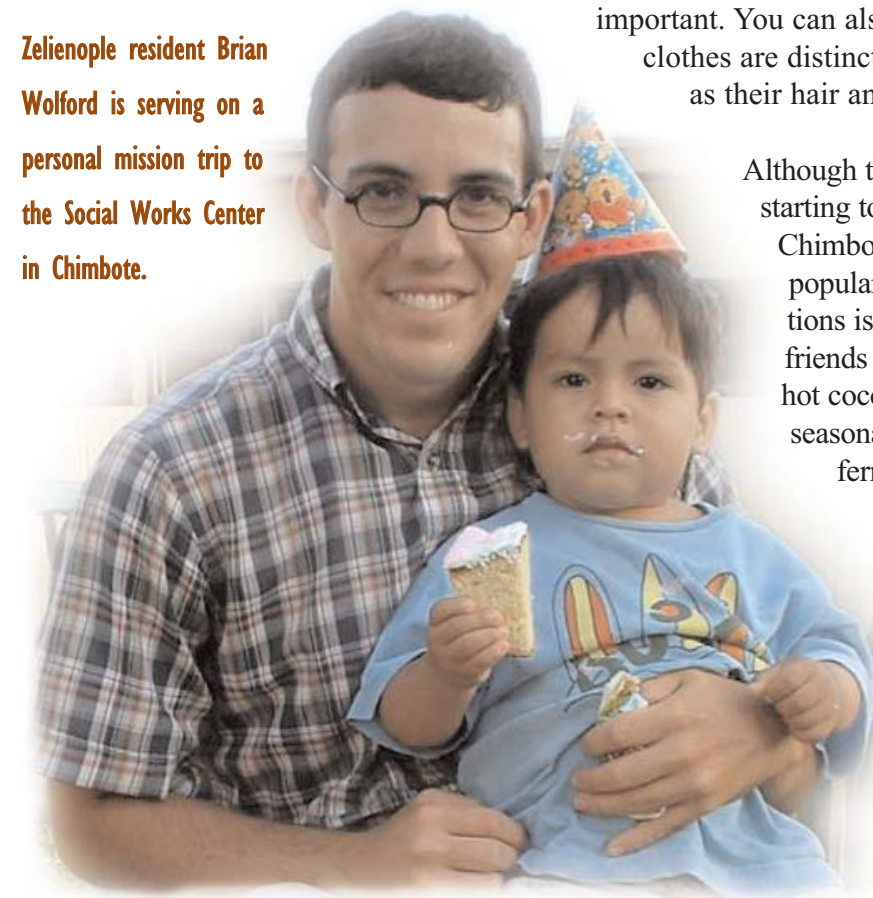
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Christmas in Chimbote Story and Photos by Brian E. Wolford

We can get used to images of desperate poverty in Peru, but Christmas is a time of hope here, too. Just like Christmas celebrations in the United States, the Social Works Center in Chimbote was full of some really amazing and beautiful decorations and celebrations, and I want to share some of the things I saw.

Some of the decorations were remarkably similar to the things we know and love about Christmas, though some things are a little different. One of the most interesting things was the Peruvian nativity scene. Most notable is the fact that in this rendition, Jesus, Mary and Joseph are in a boat. My guess is that this craft comes from the region near Lake Titicaca, where

Zelienople resident Brian Wolford is serving on a personal mission trip to the Social Works Center in Chimbote.



THE HOLY FAMILY: A Peruvian nativity scene, with the Holy Family in a reed boat like those used on Lake Titicaca in Peru.

life on the water and the use of boats is important. You can also notice that their clothes are distinctly Peruvian, as well as their hair and skin color.

Although the weather is really starting to heat up here in Chimbote, one of the most popular Christmas traditions is gathering with friends and family to drink hot cocoa and share in some seasonal sweets. The preferred pastry delight is most definitely the panetón. A panetón is a tall sweet bread about the size of a big coffee can. The bread is dotted throughout with raisins and red and

green fruits similar to what you might find in a fruitcake.

Generally, a slice of panetón is served slathered with butter or jam. The panetón is so popular here that when people asked me about Christmas traditions at home, they automatically assumed that my family in the U.S. would also eat panetón. Most people were rather shocked to hear that this Peruvian tradition had not caught on throughout the world.

While powdered cocoa is used by some here for a breakfast drink, I have never seen anyone use the powder for this particular tradition. Perhaps it would be as if your family had a tradition to share in a huge honey roasted ham on Christmas day, and then one year, the cook just decided to serve some chipped ham from the deli. It just wouldn't be right!

A local family bought presents for each and every one of the orphans. The girls



A GIFT FROM A FRIEND: Little Elena unwraps her present.

received dolls and the boys received toy cars and trucks. All the kids were really happy with all the treats and great gifts.

Another great Christmastime tradition here in Chimbote revolves around the placement of the baby Jesus in the nativity scene. Everyone waits at least until the day of Christmas Eve to place the figure of the baby Jesus in the manger.

Here at the Center, the appointed hour was 1:00 p.m. This was a good time for the ceremony and prayer service so that a good number of the staff could participate after lunch and before going home to be with their families.

The simple celebration involved singing a few songs and reading a passage from the nativity narratives of the Gospels. Although it is simple, I found it really helped me to prepare my heart and mind for the arrival of the Baby Jesus.



A CHRISTMAS TREAT: Children, below, eat panetón, a traditional Peruvian Christmas food, and have a traditional chocolate drink.

Boston doctor helps mission through her practice and parish

Dedicated and faithful people from all over the United States are supporting the Chimbote mission.

Dr. Marikim Bunnell, an OB-GYN from Boston, MA, helps the mission through her parish, St. Thomas Aquinas in Jamaica Plain, MA, as well as her practice.

Bunnell and her parish have been working for many years with and through Mr. Kenneth Roos, brother of Msgr. H. Jules Roos.

Parishioners and members of the youth group, she said, travel every year to Chimbote and bring with them medical supplies, infant and children's clothing and other donated items.

The parish youth group also works with the youth group of Cristo Rey Parish, their sister parish in Chimbote. They attend Mass together, hold dances and participate in other social activities to get to know one another.

But it's not all fun and games, Bunnell said. The Youth Group accompanies Social Works Center nurses on home visits. Assisting where they can, they see firsthand the abject poverty and sickness that they, in their own small but significant way, are helping to alleviate.

Bunnell's 12-year-old daughter, Megan, composed a poem after her visit to Chimbote two years ago during a trip with her parents and the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish youth group.

Bunnell also promotes awareness of the mission to her staff and patients. She suggests that patients

Hunger in Peru

The little boy stared up at me
His little eyes screamed help to me

Not realizing how much I have
I handed him a piece of bread

And though it meant nothing to me
He was now as happy as a bee

His little eyes stared up again
His face had nothing but a grin

And I was filled with utmost joy
Knowing that I'd helped this little boy

He said nothing but I just knew
That this boy's hunger was momentarily through

But when I left he'd once again
Have nothing, not even a friend

And though I really wanted to
I knew there was nothing I could do

Because this issue is too swirled
I'd need the help of the world

And as I left this hungry boy behind
I felt his sorrow in my mind

And though I wanted to turn back
I didn't.

— Megan Bunnell, age 12

give \$10 to pay for the prenatal care of an expectant mother in Peru as well as cover the cost of the birth of the child.

Mothers, she said, are happy to contribute, and many also donate used baby clothes and other items

for moms at the Social Works Center.

Bunnell would be happy to talk with others who would like to set up a similar effort in their offices. For more information, call Mary Ann Knochel at 412.456.3085.