

The Chimbote Foundation

“...a bridge of love and hope.”

Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh

“Being missionaries means stooping down to the needs of all, like the Good Samaritan, especially those of the poorest and most destitute people, because those who love with Christ’s Heart do not seek their own interests but the glory of the Father and the good of their neighbor alone.”

– Pope Benedict XVI

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41st Annual Peru Mission Dinner Raises Over \$135,000

On October 26, the Most Reverend Paul J. Bradley, Diocesan Administrator and Auxiliary Bishop, welcomed more than 620 guests to the 41st Annual Peru Mission Dinner with the simple, yet poignant, words of St. John: “God is Love.” The focus of Bishop Bradley’s remarks was Christ’s call for each of us to look at our neighbors across a “bridge of love” and to call his friends our friends. This annual celebration of love for the poor affords us the opportunity to renew our commitment to bring the power of Christ’s love to the forgotten and marginalized in a distant corner of the world.

Honored guests included Monsignor H. Jules Roos, who has devoted his life to manifesting Christ’s love among the poor of Chimbote, caring for both their spiritual and corporal needs. Dominican Sisters Margaret Mary Birchmeier and Lillian Bockheim, who have also devoted their lives to the mission, accompanied Monsignor Roos.

Bill Shuttleworth, who had recently returned from a trip to Chimbote where he volunteered his services, offered his



A WARM WELCOME: Bishop Paul J. Bradley, Auxiliary Bishop and Diocesan Administrator addresses the Chimbote Mission Dinner.

personal observations. His presentation asked a simple question: What would possess a person living a comfortable life in the United States, having every possible material blessing, with a bright future before him, to leave it all behind to work among the poorest of the poor? Bill’s answer was short: God. God, he said, is the one who calls us to grace and gives us the fortitude and selflessness to serve His poor.

Dinner attendees and other generous stewards of God’s blessings contributed more than \$135,000 to support the work of the caring staff of the Centro de Obras Sociales and Maternidad de Maria. Every day, they prove, as Saint John writes, that God is Love. On behalf of the people of Chimbote, we thank you all!

40 Years of God's Grace by Bill Shuttleworth

What could possibility possess someone to come here? What force in the universe could compel a rational, healthy, normal individual to commit their life to living in such a place?

I pondered these questions during my first visit to Chimbote a few years back. And now, with my Chimbote experience behind me, I think I am prepared to answer them.

As I left the mission on a night bus to Lima, I began to think about the figures of Scripture. I wondered why does a man named Abraham offer to sacrifice his son as a holocaust to a God he has not seen? Why does another man named Moses follow the instructions given from a burning bush? Why does a virgin named Mary say, "Yes," to an angel? Grace. These people were not heroes. Hero is a title given

by man to man. Grace is a gift, given by God to those with the courage to accept it. In all these cases God's will was done by his children who are filled with his grace.

Of their own power was not a nation born, a nation in bondage freed, or a Savior born. Their part was to serve the will of God. In saying, "yes," they allowed themselves to become the servants and the handmaiden of the Lord. So it is in Chimbote!

A history of faith

Chimbote, which recently celebrated 40 years of service, is a testament to God love of the poor. During that time, the mission in Chimbote has survived numerous catastrophes and challenges, and through the grace of God, the mission grew.

An earthquake in 1970 devastated Peru. In just minutes, over 175,000 people would be killed or injured. Considered to be the worst catastrophe in the southern hemisphere, hundreds of villages and towns, including Chimbote, were partially or totally destroyed.



GLIMPSES OF POVERTY: Photos of Chimbote.

“I tried to get out of the house but I was unable to walk,” Sister Maggie recalls. “I finally escaped and my eyes caught the first glimpse of the destruction. I said to myself, ‘That’s it! It’s over!’”

Miraculously, no one in the compound was seriously hurt, but the maternity ward was rendered completely unusable. The delivery room thankfully survived while a little girl, to be named Terramota (moving earth) was delivered. The Sister’s house came apart in sections, but the sections were useable. The wall around the compound and every other structure was leveled or unusable. But the mission survived.

The end of the 1970’s brought a different challenge. Some advocates for the poor began to argue that it was immoral to aid the poor, or any people, because if you begin to take care of them, they will become dependent on your support and lose their independence.

As this movement gained momentum in Peru, the Center began to be looked upon with suspicion. “During the end of the 70s it seemed everyone was out to get us,” Father Jules recalls. “The local government healthcare system was convinced we were in competition with them, and the local religious communities were questioning our activities and motives.”

Undaunted, the mission continued to grow. With the 1980s came a military dictatorship and a dramatic shift in weather patterns which resulted in devastating rains and flooding to the city of Chimbote; which typically gets less than a half an inch of rain a year. The 1990s brought the “Shining Path” terrorists. Maoist rebels, they were responsible for killing thousands including scores of religious, which they hunted with particular ferocity. Yet, the mission continued to grow.

To date, almost 80,000 children have been delivered at the Maternidad de Maria. Over 300,000 treatments are provided a year. In the last six months, more than 13,000 women have participated in the pre-natal clinic, more than 10,000 children have been active in the well baby clinic, nearly 17,000 medical consultations were conducted in the outpatient clinic, and over 22,000 vaccinations were administered. Finally, and most important, the infant mortality rate in the mission is equal to or less than that of the major medical centers in the United States.

The hospital God built

Whatever the challenge, the mission continues to grow. But there was no way the mission in Peru could ever fail. Just as God heard the cries of his children Israel in bondage in Egypt, so to He heard the cries of the poor in Peru. Fathers Jules Roos and Father Shanahan of Pittsburgh and Father Ray Moore of San Diego answered God’s call to serve. Followed shortly thereafter by an order of Dominican Nuns from Michigan. Father Jules and Sisters Maggie and Lillian remain there to this day.

So, what force in the universe could compel a rational, healthy, normal individual to commit their life to living in such a place? God! His love, his Grace and the courage of the religious who, like those who were called before, said, “Yes!”

In today’s world it’s easy to wonder where God is in the Middle East, in an Amish school in Lancaster, or in New York on September 11, 2001. But God is everywhere! And if you want to see his work first hand, go to Chimbote, and you, too, can see the hospital God built.



Pope Benedict XVI speaks on World Mission

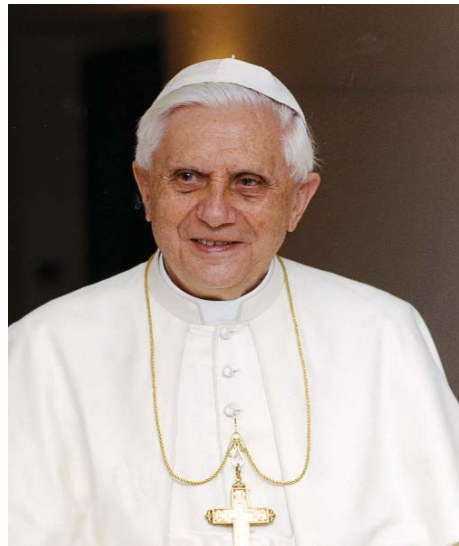
World Mission Sunday was celebrated on Sunday, October 22 this year, just four days before the annual Peru Mission Dinner. Below is an excerpt of "Charity: Soul of the Mission," the message delivered by His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Eightieth World Mission Sunday on October 22, 2006. The Holy Father's message is a powerful and timely reminder of the dedication and commitment of the many Pittsburgh missionaries who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the poor in Chimbote.

The Apostle John noted: "He who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 Jn 4: 7). Therefore, to love according to God it is necessary to live in him and of him: God is the first "home" of human beings, and only by dwelling in God do men and women burn with a flame of divine love that can set the world "on fire."

It is not difficult, then, to understand that authentic missionary concern, the priority commitment of the Ecclesial Community, is linked to faithfulness to divine love, and this is true for every individual Christian, for every local community, for the particular Churches and for the entire People of God.

The generous readiness of disciples of Christ to undertake works of human and spiritual advancement draws vigor literally from the awareness of this common mission. These works, as the beloved

John Paul II wrote in the Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, witness to "the soul of all missionary activity: love, which has been and remains the driving force of mission, and is also "the sole criterion for judging what is to be done or not done, changed or not changed. It is the principle which must direct every action, and the



Pope Benedict XVI

end to which that action must be directed. When we act with a view to charity, or are inspired by charity, nothing is unseemly and everything is good" (n. 60).

Consequently, being missionaries means loving God with all one's heart, even to the point, if necessary, of dying for him. How many priests, men and women Religious and lay people, have borne the supreme witness of love with martyrdom even in our times!

Being missionaries means stooping down to the needs of all, like the

Good Samaritan, especially those of the poorest and most destitute people, because those who love with Christ's Heart do not seek their own interests but the glory of the Father and the good of their neighbor alone.

Here lies the secret of the apostolic fruitfulness of missionary action that crosses frontiers and cultures, reaches peoples and spreads to the extreme boundaries of the world.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the World Missionary Day be a useful opportunity to understand ever better that the witness of love, the soul of the mission, concerns everyone. Indeed, serving the Gospel should not be considered a solitary adventure but a commitment to be shared by every community.

As well as those who are in the front line on the frontiers of evangelization – and I am thinking here with gratitude of the men and women missionaries – many others, children, young people and adults, with their prayers and cooperation, contribute in various ways to spreading the Kingdom of God on earth. It is to be hoped that this participation will continue to grow, thanks to the contribution of one and all.

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3rd Annual Chimbote Foundation Golf Outing

Helping to Support the
"Bridge of Love and Hope"
of the Diocese of Pittsburgh's
Mission in Chimbote, Peru

May 29, 2007

South Hills Country Club

11:00 a.m. Registration and Lunch

1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start

- **Entrance fee includes golf, cart, driving range, skill prizes, beverages on course, lunch and dinner.**
- **Registration is limited to 144 players.**

For more information, contact:

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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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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