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Report from the Catholic Medical Mission Board ...

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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Catholic Medical Mission Board . . .

With its first report in 1964, the Catholic Medical Mission Board extends best wishes to Catholic physicians everywhere, and a special "thank you" to affiliates of the National Federation for consistent aid to the agency's Professional Placement Service. This assistance by Catholic Physicians' Guild members — serving in medical mission areas and helping in various cities to screen practitioners, nurses and other medical applicants for overseas assignments — is a great boon to CMMB.

In the past 12-months period, which marked the second year of the Placement Program, the agency assigned 15 medical volunteers abroad. They included four general practitioners, six Registered Nurses and (one each) surgeon, obstetrician, gynecologist, pharmacist and laboratory technician. Other applicants were being processed as 1963 drew to a close.

Among the volunteers were Dr. Peter Rizzolo and his wife, Anne, a Registered Nurse, of Flemington, New Jersey. They left December 28 for the Quiche Mission, conducted by the Sacred Heart Fathers at Chichicastenango, Guatemala. The general practitioner and Mrs. Rizzolo were sponsored by the Sacramento County Medical Society for a period of one month. The Rizzolos' five children remained with relatives during the couple's absence.

Members of the Sacramento County Medical Society have served the Chichicastenango installation since April, 1962. An excellent monthly rotating

system was organized by non-Catholic Dr. John Babich, a pediatrician. He and Mrs. Babich, a Registered Nurse, attended many patients there, as have Dr. Clyde Ralph, pediatrician; Mrs. Ralph, psychologist, Dr. William Murphy, urologist and Dr. Bert A. Daley, general practitioner.

On January 6, Dr. Joseph Grady, president of the Detroit Catholic Physicians' Guild, flew to Jocotan, Guatemala, for his second 30-day period of service in 13 months. His replacement in February was Dr. Philip Cortese, president of the Catholic Physicians' Guild of Albany, New York. These physicians proved a welcome relief for Dr. Luis Rementería who has been kept extremely busy since last summer, when he arrived at Jocotan. Dr. Rementería, who will return to the United States in July, has done superb organizational work at the hospital which serves 77,000 natives.

The selfless efforts of these practitioners exemplify the spirit of compassion for the poor, and reflect a professional zeal of the highest order. By their example at Chichicastenango, Jocotan and other under-developed areas, they show what can be done when groups of physicians "adopt" various Medical Mission facilities and insure their successful operation by providing doctors on a rotation basis.

The Catholic Medical Mission Board, through its director, Father Anthony F. LaBau, S.J., has taken part in National Federation meetings and programs designed to encourage more of these group-sponsored proj-

ects. CMMB welcomes the opportunity to participate in any activities to further that end. The agency has formulated a plan whereby Catholic Physicians' Guilds throughout the nation may possibly consolidate forces for more efficiency and less duplication of effort. The proposal is being submitted to the presidents of several Guilds and a favorable reaction to this plan is anticipated. The overall goal has vast potentials — with 104 Guilds in the United States and a membership of 6,800.

In another phase of its operation, CMMB continues to supply to volunteer doctors abroad the variety of medicines and supplies so necessary wherever the healing art is practiced. The scope of CMMB's export supply program has broadened enormously over the years and continues to expand with each passing month. It is interesting to note that in 1953 the overseas deliveries of medicines amounted to 56 tons; the export figure for 1963 — a decade later — was a gigantic 1,000 tons. These vast shipments, mountains

of giant-size cartons, were allocated to 547 hospitals and 4,000 dispensaries in 80 countries around the globe.

The tremendous role facing CMMB today — and for many tomorrows — is to fill the numerous urgent requests for doctors, nurses, medical technicians and paramedical teams. Each delivery of mail brings scores of appeals to the Placement Desk. Just at this writing, petitions from 26 lands seek 79 general practitioners, 16 surgeons, 3 radiologists, 3 pediatricians, 4 ophthalmologists, 6 obstetrician-gynecologists, 2 anesthesiologists, 39 Registered Nurses, 6 laboratory technicians, 6 x-ray technicians, 1 physiotherapist and pharmacist.

Members of the medical profession who are interested in serving at medical installations overseas are invited to write to:

The Placement Desk
Catholic Medical Mission Board
10 W. 17th St.
New York, New York 10011