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SEE HOW THE WORLD SUFFERS!

The Church and Mankind Need Doctors

RT. REV. MSGR A. J. BROUWERS



The two-thirds of mankind which Catholics call the "Mission Lands" hardly knows the care of a doctor or the use of effective medicines. In the United States there is a doctor for less than every two thousand persons. In Asia, Africa and elsewhere most people have never seen one. In these mission lands medical relief for widespread disease, for malnutrition and general misery is practically unknown. Much of this common misery, a high infant mortality, premature death rate and witch doctor quackery could be reduced or eradicated if dedicated and capable physicians and their medical auxiliaries were available.

Among this hapless world of suffering, about 2,000 millions, the Catholic Church looms as the Good Samaritan. It is a necessary role for the Church, since sickened and starved bodies are barriers to the teaching of the glad tidings from on high. To continue this role around the world, mountains of medicines, millions of dollars, tons of equipment and thousands

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of doctors, dentists, nurses and technicians are urgently needed everywhere.

THE MISSION DOCTOR ASSOCIATION

The Mission Doctors' Association has been duly established under Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles to fulfill these needs of the Church in at least a small measure. The Association was inaugurated by members of the Catholic Physicians' Guild of the archdiocese, thus assuring stability and permanence of organization.

The "Mission Doctors," as the Association calls itself, is now able to recruit, screen and prepare doctors and all other personnel dedicated to the professional care of the sick. The Association has requests from Bishops and Catholic hospitals throughout the world.

Our ambition is as soon as feasible to create teams of doctors, dentists, nurses and para-medical experts to staff small mission hospitals with American Catholics. We would thus render more agreeable and efficient the professional life and work of our members.

The Association has a constitution and by-laws, providing a Board of Directors who are empowered to conduct and continue its purposes and activities. The fi-

nancial and material needs of Mission Doctors will flow from the generosity of the Catholic Physicians' Guild and the thoughtful gifts from individuals and organizations.

THOSE NEEDED IN MISSION LANDS

We have in hand an encouraging list of doctors of medicine, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and technicians, expressing ardent desire to consecrate a few years or a lifetime to medical missionary work. It is not enough, however, for such willing candidates to dash off to faraway places without adequate screening and preparation. The professionally suitable must evince also a genuine spirit of sacrifice, often so cruelly demanded in one's life and work in mission lands. To the famed Hippocratic oath must be added something of Divine Charity. The doctor's soul must be fired with the zeal of a St. Paul, his healing hands made more soothing by the Divine Physician, and his generous heart saturated with a love for God's "little ones" that counts no personal cost.

Unless "missionary" with all its meaning is added to "Doctor" or "Dentist" or "Nurse," the aims of the Association shall have been thwarted. As heaven is above earth, eternity beyond time, and the soul of a worth immeasurably above the body, the professional expert *only* would hinder more than help the cause of Almighty God.

Mission Doctors, therefore, seeks:

1. Devout and qualified doctors and hospital personnel.

2. Those willing and able to dedicate preferably two years at least under missionary Bishops in the mission lands.
3. Those ready to submit to a screening deemed necessary to the Association's purposes and plans.

MISSION DOCTORS' REQUIREMENTS

Age limits are twenty-five to forty, with exceptions when indicated. The Board of Directors within the scope of the constitution and by-laws makes all decisions in this regard. Each member at the time of assignment signs a contract with the Bishop of the area and with the Association. Whenever necessary, the Board will provide funds for transportation of assignees, and their families and possessions. The Bishop provides housing, board, local transportation and medical care during the term of assignment. This may be done variously, either by salary, government grants or allowances from the Bishop.

Converts to the Faith must be practicing Catholics at least three years before acceptance by the Association.

Evidence of graduation from an approved school of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Hospital Administration, X-ray or Laboratory Technology, and suitable evidence of experience in the para-medical fields are required.

HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must have robust health, to withstand the rigors of tropical heat, dampness, difficul-

ties of travel in mission lands, differences of diet and the serious adjustments always to be made to a foreign culture and way of life. Each must submit to the Board besides a general questionnaire, any clinical testing deemed necessary to guarantee emotional fitness for a taxing occupation.

After the Association has appraised the applicant's qualifications, he must come to Los Angeles for a year of orientation and spiritual preparation. These courses are given on weekends from September to September of any given year.

THOSE NOT ELIGIBLE

1. The physically unfit.
2. The emotionally unstable.
3. The divorced unless special exception is made.
4. The spiritually weak and "bad Catholics."
5. Romantic dreamers who might think a Missionary Doctor's life an escape from the routine, monotony and complexity of America.
6. Married couples with children when their primary education cannot be provided.

HOW TO APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Please write to the current Chairman, Richard Lescoe, M.D., or this writer, at the address which we repeat—1531 W. 9th St., Los Angeles 15, California. We shall immediately send you a questionnaire. Kindly send us a photograph of yourself and family, if married, and the names and ad-

resses of several clerical and lay references who would know you well enough to judge your aptitude and readiness in dedicating yourself to this difficult missionary medical work.

OTHER ASSISTANCE

Lay people may aid the mission lands and the conversion of mankind by prayer and by their persons or their purses. If you cannot give your person, why not give a little of your means to help those able to go overseas. Medical equipment, medicines by the ton, transportation and many other expenses burden the Association. Gifts of every kind and amount are greatly appreciated. All monies are tax-deductible.

Help the medical missionary cause at least with your spiritual and material resources.

FILE OF REQUESTS

A large number of requests from Missionary Bishops and directors of Catholic hospitals in Africa, India, Japan, Korea and elsewhere is on file. Most of these correspondents are seeking general practitioners. Some, however, need specialists in various fields of medicine and surgery. The hospitals and existing medical facilities range from small dispensaries with a few beds for in-patients, to hospitals of a hundred or more beds and having adequate surgical, pharmaceutical, x-ray and laboratory equipment. Some of these are in or near towns; others are in remote areas and at distances from towns or cities.

Areas, circumstances, climate, schooling for non-native children, transportation, support for the doctors and other personnel, and a host of other material elements of life in mission lands, vary from one place to another. Differences are often quite great even in the same country.

SERVING IN AFRICA

Our first Mission Doctor assigned to Africa was Dr. Tom Bain who is in residence at the 270-bed hospital in Driefontein, Southern Rhodesia. He has been there with his wife and four children since January 1961. Six "Lay Mission Helpers" from Los Angeles are now working with Dr. Bain.

Three more doctors and their wives have now volunteered to give three years' service on the mission frontiers of Africa. The three young men in their 30's are members of the Mission Doctors' Association. They are: Herbert Sorensen, M.D., James Fitzgerald, M.D. and Joseph Kirby, D.D.S. Along with their wives, they are currently under training in ascetics

and missiology and will leave for African posts in September.

Interviewed by *The Tidings*, the Catholic weekly of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the doctors expressed their motivation for mission service. "It's not just us but the Mystical Body of Christ. The motivation is love of God. The goal is service to God, and not just a desire for personal salvation." One indicated, "I think the most important thing is to know why you are going there, because you can practice medicine or dentistry here in better facilities. I'm discontented here, from the spiritual standpoint. You feel you could do a lot more there than you are doing here."

"You think of the Church comfortable and you think of the Church suffering." All agreed to this remark. They feel that aside from the mercy of medicine, there is full time opportunity to give witness to a Christian way of life.

"Other people might look at it as if we were giving up something. We look at it as finding something."