



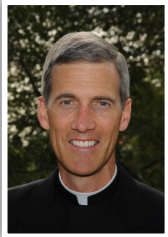
# HELPING HANDS Medical Missions

Delivering compassionate healthcare and the Gospel  
to the most needy in the developing world

[www.hhmm.org](http://www.hhmm.org)

Forward to a Friend

## Living the Missionary Experience



### The invitation:

In the spring of 2012, I received a call that HHMM was in need of a Chaplain for the mission in Sonsonate, El Salvador. This was to be my third mission, having previously participated in 2005 and 2011. I couldn't say no to this attractive offer. I remembered how powerful my experience was on previous trips and I know how important it is to have a priest along to administer the sacraments and give spiritual direction to the missionaries and the poor who live in this desolate region of the world.

### A typical day – helping to heal souls:

I set up a couple of chairs off to the side of the clinic, donned my purple stole and started hearing confessions and giving spiritual direction. I met with most of the missionaries for either confession or spiritual direction or both. I also had the great privilege to hear the confessions and give absolution to the many Salvadorians, so many I could not count. I heard one heart wrenching story after another. For the most part the moral suffering of the people was worse than the physical suffering. Many of them just needed someone who would listen to their problems with compassion. It was spiritually satisfying at the end of the day knowing that I had made a little difference – perhaps a big difference in the these lives of these simple people.

### The great need for spiritual missionaries:

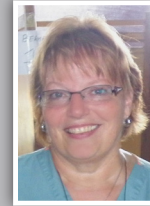
It was a wonderful blessing to serve the poor of Sonsonate and be part of the HHMM Mission Team. Below I have included three simple ways in which you can get more involved in living the mission experience in your own life.

- 1. Sign up:** I encourage anyone who feels the call to attend a mission to go, whether for the first time or for the 15th. Go! Bring your love for your profession and your compassion for souls to the poor.
  - 2. Prepare your heart and soul:** My experience and that of other missionaries show that you will learn more from the poor whom you serve than they will learn from you.
  - 3. Evangelize:** After your mission is complete, bring the simplicity you have learned from the poor back to the states. The world needs your witness of compassionate care at your medical practices, hospitals, schools and homes.
- I am eagerly awaiting my next call to attend a mission.

Fr. Matthew Kaderabek, LC  
Catholic Priest and Missionary Chaplain

*Each year Helping Hands Medical Missions sends 10 Catholic priests to serve as Mission Chaplains on our various missions throughout the world. Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, all the expense of our Mission Chaplains' are paid for, including airfare.*

## Meet the Missionaries



Christine Hunter

Christine Hunter, BSN is a ten year participant in the Sonsonate, El Salvador Mission. She is a nurse in Houston and she and her husband have 2 sons. Christine is a member of St. Thomas More Parish where she is also a member of the Sounds of Faith Choir. She is active in the Mission Council for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and the Texas Mission Council.

**How would you describe your volunteer experience?**

*Profound. Powerful. Life changing.*

**How long have you been volunteering with HHMM?**

*Ten years*

**What is it that motivates you to keep volunteering?**

*The strength and rejuvenation of my faith that I experience by serving others keeps me going until I can return. It truly is in serving others that we receive!*

**What has been your favorite HHMM moment or story during your time of serving with us?**

*There are so many, but my favorite spans all my years on mission. A young woman I met my first mission, and have seen each year following touched my heart. Her strength and endurance is humbling. She was married, a mother of 2 beautiful children and caretaker for her elderly mother. She had an infection causing elephantiasis in her leg. She could not wear pants nor two shoes - the foot and leg were just too big. But each year, she made the difficult trip lugging her useless leg (weighing about 40 pounds) to see us in clinic. We taught her to care for her leg, gave her bandages and a special fitted boot for walking over the years we served there. In 2011, she came again, but in tears, begging to have the leg removed. I spoke with our team and a local physician and HHMM team member, Dr. Palomo, who by the grace of God agreed to do the surgery. He worked with her through the surgery, the rehabilitation and the fitting of her prosthesis. This year, she returned to clinic but this time she was sporting a new pair of jeans, two shoes and an incredible beaming smile. She said she had her life back and was forever grateful to God for our presence and help. She will get another revision of a lighter prosthesis this year to help her ability to get on and off the bus. She is a reminder of God's grace and compassion and why we volunteer on mission. God Bless!*

Serve with us on a mission. Learn more at [www.hhmm.org](http://www.hhmm.org).