



# November Newsletter Reflection

From Deacon Rick Medina



## Still Hoping

To hold onto Hope is to hold onto Faith. Last summer, I hoped that this year's letter would be greeting you in a fully post-pandemic world. While progress has been made around many developed parts of the world, the COVID-19 virus, unfortunately, continues to threaten the health and hope of many.

All of us have suffered to varying degrees, and we now continue to adjust the ways in which we cope and live. Unfortunately, the pandemic is still harshly devastating our brothers and sisters with far fewer resources, especially those in developing countries. Since the pandemic started, we have received TRIPLE the amount of project requests than usual, as more communities struggle with food shortages, lack of access to adequate medical care, and clean water. Young people, especially girls, are falling further behind in their education due to the lack of technological infrastructure required for safe and distanced learning. Even the means to worship at Mass, the source of hope for many, has been reduced significantly, if not outright stopped.

## Still Praying

We have often been at our wit's end trying to figure out what more we could do to help as many people as possible. We expanded the means and increased our communications with our supporters, writing hand-written postcards to those we couldn't reach by email or phone. We even drove to meet benefactors. All the while, we increased our prayers for the people in need and our supporters. I am pleased to share an insight I received during one of these quiet times of prayer while asking God to help our work. I came across a quote about prayer by St. John Vianney:

*"Private prayer is like a straw scattered here and there: if you set it on fire, it makes a lot of little flames. But gather these straws into a bundle and light them, and you get a mighty fire, rising like a column into the sky; public prayer is like that."*

I could not help but see a parallel between this quote and how, together, you, I, and the many supporters of Catholic World Mission have banded together to help even more people in need last year and this year! I know that many of you prayed in private for God to help you see beyond your own challenges and limitations to find the courage to extend help to others in need. **I do not doubt our individual private prayers were gathered by the Holy Spirit, bundled up, and lit into a mighty fire rising like a column into the sky.** And those prayers were answered as demonstrated by your actions.

I invite you to see the fruits of your prayers and generosity by reading the stories and seeing the pictures in this newsletter. I also encourage you to see more life-saving actions you made possible by visiting our website.

## **Always Grateful**

A lot has changed since the pandemic. I lost family and friends due to COVID. We mourn the death of friends and supporters of CWM alike. I long for the day when I can travel to meet and thank you all in person. For now, I am comforted by the scripture from Luke 14:13-14 and the belief that “if we give with no thought of reward, our reward is certain.”

*“..., when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Luke 14:12-14*

Catholic World Mission recognizes that your contributions came with much sacrifice. We can never thank you enough; only the good Lord can thank you sufficiently. On behalf of all the people you helped and will help, **THANK YOU.**