

For we are

GOD'S HELPERS



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I Get It. I Really Do.

At Holy Spirit Hospital in Makeni, Sierra Leone, Sally Rojas is witnessing a different world of medicine—one that's both sobering and profoundly inspiring. Sally is reminded daily how access to health care shapes lives. Thanks to your support, she is there offering her skills, her compassion, and her unshakable sense of purpose.

"There are so many illnesses and complications at Holy Spirit Hospital that we rarely see in the States," she writes from Holy Spirit Hospital. "So many things back home can be taken care of easily and are easily identifiable."

One teenage boy, she recalls, lives with a ventricular septal defect—"basically a hole in his heart." In the U.S., this would have been corrected in infancy. But in Sierra Leone, without early diagnosis or access to surgery, he went untreated until age 10, when a charity from Spain intervened. Now 17, he faces lifelong complications. "There's nothing more that can be done except ease some of his discomfort."

Sally's mission reports shine with humanity and urgency. Like her account of a young man who developed tetanus after falling from a palm tree while collecting nuts for palm oil. "He had never received a vaccination. Whether that was due to lack of resources or lack of education about preventative measures, I don't know." The result? Paralysis, lockjaw, constant pain—and incredibly difficult, costly treatment. "To those of you who have never gotten a tetanus booster, get it," she writes with striking clarity. "The suffering this young man endures is something I would hope everyone avoids."



Sally with fellow nurses
at Holy Spirit Hospital.

Each day of her missionary service as a nurse brings a new challenge—and a new reason for gratitude. A teenage girl with undiagnosed Type 1 Diabetes suffered for years without consistent insulin. "She lives in a remote village," Sally explains. "Her family had no car... Eventually they stopped coming." The girl worsened until she returned to Holy Spirit Hospital, where she is now receiving the care she desperately needs. "We are doing all we can," Sally says. And thanks to you—she can.

Not all surprises are painful. "I watched a nurse tell a 3-year-old boy to open his mouth. He obeyed without complaint, she put medication in, and wonders of wonders, he swallowed."

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Mark repairs a boy's cherished toy car, made from recycled cans.

Quiet Strength, Lasting Impact

Thanks to your generous support, Mark McGraw has quietly become a sign of service and lay leadership in the Diocese of Damongo, Ghana—now well past the two-thirds mark of his original three-year commitment.

Mark began his mission as a facilities manager and handyman at the Unity Centre, but his role quickly grew. Soon, he became an advisor to the restaurant and bar manager. Then, at the close of 2023, through contributions from donors like you, Mark was able to refurbish an old truck. That truck not only expanded his reach but added a third title to his resume: Unity Centre driver.

By the end of 2024, diocesan leadership entrusted Mark with even more responsibility, appointing him Acting Manager of the entire Unity Centre—overseeing the restaurant, bar, guesthouse, and its 25 employees.

While Mark's leadership style is quiet and unassuming, his impact is undeniable. The Vicar General of the diocese shared with LMH that "Mark's accomplishments are impossible to miss." He has expanded facilities, reduced costs, and empowered employees through hands-on collaboration and careful delegation.

Locals have noticed, too. They call him Ayene Fra Fra, meaning "God's Greeting" in one of the local languages, and children regularly come to him for help repairing their handmade toys.

Mark recently requested—and was joyfully granted—an extension for a fourth year. Because of you, he can continue to be a visible sign of God's love and care in Damongo. Thank you for making this mission possible. ✝

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Sally's amazement is palpable. "I can count on one hand the number of times I've seen a child that age take medicine willingly."

Thanks to your generosity, Sally received formation that prepared her to develop grit and a sense of humor in her missionary service. "My fellow nurses back in the States better strap in," she writes. "I'm about to tell some stories that will make you squirm." Like the time a nurse reused a syringe all day for the same patient—even after it hit the floor. "I asked, 'Do you not throw it away?' She replied, 'No, our resources are limited.' I

nodded, hoping my eyes weren't betraying the internal screaming in my mind. I get it. I really do."

It's easy to assume that medicine is universal—that what we know of healthcare in the U.S. applies everywhere. But Sally's

experience says otherwise. And it's only through your generosity that Lay Mission-Helpers like her can bridge that gap with compassion, courage, and skill.

"I have never been this excited to be working at a hospital," she says. Her joy, her presence, and her service are made possible by you. ✝



Sally with her hospital colleague Sister Peace



“I never imagined experiencing that amount of love and support from a community I had become a part of so recently.”

Sally with her mom, dad and sister at her commissioning.

A Community That Gives Back

In the midst of her missionary service at Holy Spirit Hospital in Makeni, Sierra Leone, Sally experienced a heartbreaking personal loss—her beloved mother passed away. Thousands of miles from home, Sally faced the pain of distance and delay. “All I could think about was my dad and my sister and my family and how much this was hurting them,” she wrote. “Every day that week was so hard to face.”

But she wasn’t alone. Within hours of her mother’s passing, the Makeni community surrounded Sally with compassion. “I was given food, care, and sympathy,” she shared. “The Catholic community even organized a requiem Mass to honor my mother and pray for her and my family.”

In a place she had come to serve, Sally found herself held by a deep well of love and solidarity. “I never imagined experiencing that amount of love and support from a community I had become a part of so recently.”

Sally is home now, healing with her family and awaiting her mother’s burial. But her heart remains with the people of Sierra Leone. “I want to go back,” she says. “To the people who helped me, who showed me what it means to be part of a true community.” With your prayers and support, Sally’s desire to resume her mission will become a reality.

Please join us in prayer for Sally’s mom, Laura, for Sally, her father and sister. ✠



LMH 70th Anniversary Thanksgiving Mass

The Lay Mission-Helpers Association joyfully invites you to a special Thanksgiving Mass on Sunday, July 20, 2025, at 10:00 AM at St. John the Evangelist Church in Los Angeles (6028 S. Victoria Ave.) as we celebrate two major milestones: 70 years of mission and 25 years at St. John's.

The Mass will be presided over by Monsignor Michael Meyers, former Director of both the Archdiocesan Mission Office and LMH, whose long-standing support continues to bless our ministry.

Together, we will give thanks for the bold vision of our founder, Msgr. Anthony Brouwers, and honor the legacy of over 750 lay missionaries who have served in 37 countries around the world.

Following the Mass, please join us for fellowship and the cutting of the LMH 70th Anniversary cake!

This is a moment of joy, remembrance, and renewed commitment to mission. All are welcome—we hope to see you there! ✠



Rose Gala

Friends of Mission

... SUNDAY ...
OCTOBER 5, 2025

10:30 Mass
11:30 Silent Auction
12:30 Gala Luncheon

Mary & Joseph Retreat Center
5300 Crest Road
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

laymissionhelpers.org/gala

Tickets will be on sale in August

