



Through Faith and Action



Parroquia La Resurrección



Street near the parish neighborhood.



Pictured in the center are the pilgrims who traveled to Bogotá, Colombia alongside Fr. Mike Wolfe and Fr. Martí Colom.



Classroom at a school in collaboration with the parish.



Chapel under guidance of Parroquia La Resurrección

PILGRIMAGE TO BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

WRITTEN BY AMY TAYLOR

Traveling to another country can be a scary endeavor – especially if you’ve rarely ever done it before. However, I can safely say that the time I spent in Bogotá, Colombia with the Community of St. Paul was a life-changing experience for me. Through the work of the Office for World Mission, I was able to make connections with people thousands of miles from home, and I am so grateful to have been invited to participate in the “Pilgrimage to Bogotá with the Community of St. Paul.”

Our group of 10 pilgrims was led by Fr. Martí Colom and Fr. Mike Wolfe, who are the assigned pastors of Parroquia La Resurrección. Warm, welcoming, humorous, and supportive, the two priests took time out of their busy schedules to share with us the work of their parish, the ministries they support, and the people they serve. In addition to learning about Colombia’s history, sociological realities, and ecclesial realities, we also had time for group and individual reflections, prayer, Mass, food, and fellowship.

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This pilgrimage was one of the few trips that I have taken part in where I was allowed to truly become immersed in the culture. One such memorable time was after Mass on one of the last nights. Our group was invited to tag along with the parish youth group to the backstreets of Bogotá, giving sandwiches and hot tea to the homeless. It was an amazing opportunity to follow in the footsteps of Christ and see these youth – future leaders of Colombia! – learn about the realities that their neighbors face every day.

The time our group spent with one another and the lessons we learned allowed us to become “knit at the heart.” I feel a great connection with each person and am confident that we all will remain in touch.

Father Mike Wolfe and Father Martí Colom are Milwaukee archdiocesan missionary priests and members of the Community of St. Paul (CSP). Based in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee with its headquarters in Racine, the CSP is a public Association of Christian Faithful comprised of clergy and laity. Their missionary activity is present in our archdiocesan sister parish La Sagrada Familia in the Dominican Republic, as well as in Ethiopia, Bolivia, Mexico and Colombia.

MISSIO INVEST



Photo and logo above are credited to Missio Invest at <https://missioinvest.org/en/>.

MISSIO INVEST

One of the outreach efforts of The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Inc. includes being among the initial investors of the MISIF LLC (Missio Invest Social Impact Fund), as well as a collaborator in the mission of Missio Invest. Per an interview with Joelle Birge, Investment Director at Missio Invest, we were able to showcase the organization’s history and success throughout the years.

Missio Invest started in 2014 with the intention to utilize the Catholic Church’s resources to address social problems, poverty, food insecurity, and to make the Church more self-sustaining and less dependent on precarious donations. The Missio Invest team initially started looking at farmland in sub-Saharan Africa seeing that Africa has a young, growing population, as well as underutilized church-owned land.

MISSIO INVEST (CONTINUED)

The idea is to create sustainable jobs (which allow for successful youth employment) through food security, health programs, and education. The real power of the program is that even if the farm makes some profit, it goes to other charitable purposes like day care, training programs or other social outreach.

Some of the initial loans were given in 2016 and 2017 in both Kenya and Uganda. Since then, Missio Invest has expanded to many African countries where they have individuals working on the ground. The current countries where loans are being issued are Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria, and Ghana.



The initial entry point into a country begins with a team member of Missio Invest reaching out to a country's national director of *The Pontifical Mission Societies*, the Bishop's Conference, or a religious congregation. Through these initial connections, the groups collaborate to determine which enterprises would best benefit from the potential loans and technical assistance.

At the beginning of Missio Invest's work, agriculture was the focus sector for loans. As Missio Invest has grown, their work has expanded into healthcare and education as well. Joelle pointed out that oftentimes multiple enterprises are located together. For example, a religious community might use the produce from its farm to feed the children at the nearby school. When looking at the loan-receiving communities, Joelle expressed she 'is really inspired by the Brothers, Sisters and Fathers,' in regard to their success and attentiveness toward being good stewards of the loans and enterprises.

The average duration of Missio Invest's loans ranges from five to seven years. There is continuous communication between the loan borrower and Missio Invest throughout this time. During the loan period, an 'on-the-ground' team member will visit the various enterprise sites at least once or twice a year to observe and report the progress and status of the work and to provide business advisory and technical assistance as needed.

At the end of the loan period, the goal is to have developed a sustainable enterprise, allowing the money that was once used to pay back the loan to now be a new source of income for the community.

According to numbers provided by Missio Invest, they calculate that there will be a greater financial benefit to the mission church from a loan of this kind (to a local enterprise) than if we invested the funds in the market and gave them the interest on our portfolio. That's a very powerful use of our reserve investment funds!

For those interested in becoming involved in Missio Invest, whether that be on an individual or organizational level, there are two ways, investing and donating for technical assistance.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Inc. is proud to be among the initial investors of the Missio Invest Social Impact Fund (MISIF LLC), providing a path to solidarity and supporting our brothers and sisters in the faith.

Want to learn more about Missio Invest? Click [here](#)!

If you are looking to read the 2022 Missio Invest Impact Report visit the report [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS



Around the World Celebration
Experiencing Mission Through Culture

Friday,
September 29, 2023

5:30 PM - 9:00 PM
St. Matthias Catholic Church
9306 W. Beloit Rd.
Milwaukee, WI 53227

FEATURING
Bishop Schuerman
Auxiliary Bishop
Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Fr. Jerry Herda
Chaplain of the Milwaukee Brewers
Pastor of St. Matthias Catholic Church

Missionary Stories
Silent Auction
Cultural Music Groups
Foods from Around the World
Wine Pull & Much More!

You are invited to attend our Around the World Celebration! [Join us](#) as we gather together to experience mission through culture by enjoying cultural music groups, foods from around the world, missionary stories, and much more!

We look forward to celebrating global mission with both new and familiar faces! Interested in being a sponsor? [Let us know!](#)

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