

# *MOP VOLUNTEER PROGRAM*



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## INTRODUCTION

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### INSTITUTE

*The Missionaries of the Poor (MOP) is an international monastic order of Brothers dedicated to Joyful Service with Christ on the Cross to serve the poorest of the poor. The order was started in 1981 by Father Richard HoLung and has now grown to over 550 brothers. MOP has mission in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean Regions and the USA. Our main home is in Kingston, Jamaica, where we maintain six mission homes for the over 500 homeless persons.*

*We welcome lay volunteers to come and join us in our work and welcome all to join our spirituality and prayer life. Our mission is to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ primarily by works of mercy and secondarily through liturgy, preaching, music, teaching and sacraments.*

### FOUNDER:

*Father Richard Ho Lung, a Catholic priest, in 1981, founded the MOP in Kingston, Jamaica. He was educated by the Franciscan sisters in Kingston and then by the Jesuits at St George's College. After completing his studies at St. George's, on August 15, 1959, he joined the Society of Jesus, the most respected of religious orders and certainly the most intellectually acclaimed in the Roman Catholic Church. He was ordained to the priesthood on July 4, 1971 and diligently studied, earning Master's degrees in Philosophy, English Literature and Theology, along with a Licentiate in Theology and a Doctorate in Humanities. He taught at St. George's College, at the University of the West Indies and at Boston College in the USA. In 1980, Father Ho Lung made the difficult decision of leaving the Society of Jesus, which he loved, and founded a religious community of men who dedicated their lives to the service of the rejected and the destitute.*

*In July 19, 1981, Fr. Richard Ho Lung started the Brothers of the Poor (BOP). Hayden Augustine, Gregory Ramkissoon, and Brian Kerr were the first to join Fr. Ho Lung, sharing his vision of dedicating their lives for the poor. Together they set about the task of sharing and relying only on God's love. At that time they were busily engaged in apostolic works. They reached out to the very poor in the slums in the ghettos of Kingston, serving the neediest people, the most forgotten and abandoned of peoples. They provided Kingston with a voice of justice, a voice of peace, a voice for conversion within the Christian community in Jamaica.*



## CHURCH OF THE LAITY

*There are innumerable opportunities open to the laity for the exercise of their apostolate of evangelization and sanctification. The very testimony of their Christian life and good works done in a supernatural spirit have the power to draw men to belief and to God; for the Lord says, "Even so let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity - **APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM a.#6)***

*While every exercise of the apostolate should be motivated by charity, some works by their very nature can become specially vivid expressions of this charity. Christ the Lord wanted these works to be signs of His messianic mission (cf. Matt. 11:4-5).*

*The greatest commandment in the law is to love God with one's whole heart and one's neighbor as oneself (cf. Matt. 22:37-40). Christ made this commandment of love of neighbor His own and enriched it with a new meaning. For He wanted to equate Himself with His brethren as the object of this love when He said, "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it for Me" (Matt. 25:40). Assuming human nature, He bound the whole human race to Himself as a family through a certain supernatural solidarity and established charity as the mark of His disciples, saying, "By this will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).*

*(From) Her very early days, the holy Church.....while it rejoices in the (many) undertakings..., it claims works of charity as its own inalienable duty and right. For this reason, pity for the needy and the sick and works of charity and mutual aid intended to relieve human needs of every kind are held in highest honor by the Church.(3) (Decree on the Apostolate of Laity - **APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM - a.#8)***



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## **LAY VOLUNTEERISM – A PILGRIMAGE OF HEALING AND RENEWAL**

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*While many of our friends around the world share their material possessions with The Missionaries of the Poor, many others share themselves--their time, energy and skills--by visiting MOP missions and serving as Lay Volunteers.*

*Lay Volunteers stay with us up to two weeks and assist the brothers in the daily work of caring and ministering to the poor in the Centers for homeless. In addition to the daily work, volunteers share in the daily life of the community, which includes daily Mass, hours of prayer, meals and lots of music! At the same time, volunteers experience the simplicity of MOP life and gain many spiritual benefits from their time with us and the poor.*

*Time spent with the Missionaries of the Poor is, for most of our lay volunteers, a life-changing experience. Our visitors go home with a renewed faith, a new love for the poor, a new vision for their lives and plans to return and help again. Your personal prayer life will be enhanced as you get to see how the brothers pray and learn of the devotions that sustain them spiritually. Seeing the simplicity of the brothers, you will likely go home with a heightened sense of the materialism of western culture and an appreciation for a simpler way of life. The service rendered to the poor is a pilgrimage of healing and renewal of faith.*



## **RULES FOR VISITORS**

### **SILENCE:**

*While there are so many exciting things to learn and do among the Missionaries of the Poor, there are certain rules all are required to carefully observe. These rules will give you the freedom to enjoy your visit!*

*Areas of silence: Certain areas as kept silent for the spirit of recollection and observe prayerfulness. They are: Dormitories, Corridors, Classrooms, Libraries, Bathrooms, Chapels. Access these areas only upon consent by the Superior or his delegate.*

### **DRESS CODE**

- € *To ensure religious decorum, the following **dress code** must be observed by all visitors to the homes of the Missionaries of the Poor:*
  - *Men - Shirts or T-shirts ( Must have sleeves - nothing sleeveless, please); shorts (just below the knee) or long pants.*
  - *Ladies – Modest blouses or T-shirts – no tank tops (Shirts must have sleeves & modest neckline - nothing sleeveless); just above the knee shorts, long pants, or dress/skirts*
- € *When participating in Liturgical activities in the Chapel or church, please wear the following:*
  - *Men – Short Sleeved shirt and long pants*
  - *Ladies – Short Sleeved, modest blouse and dress/skirts or long pants*

*No Caps within the room, No tight clothes by anyone (men or women).*

- € *DO NOT WEAR MID-THIGH SHORTS OR MINI-SKIRTS ANYTIME DURING YOUR VISIT*

### **COMMUNICATION: RELATING TO THE MOP BROTHERS & RESIDENTS**

- € *Visitors may engage in conversation with only the Brothers in-Charge of the laity.*
- € *While at the apostolate, please restrict your conversations only to the Brother-in-charge of that center. Please do not seek correspondence with the Brothers at any time by mail or by phone or seek to exchange addresses with any of the Brothers without the consent of the Superior.*
- € *We appreciate your desire to meet the needs of our Community and our poor in various ways. Please always obtain permission from the Brothers in- Charge of the laity not any other Brothers before obtaining goods, instruments or gadgets for the use of the Brothers, whether individually or by the Community.*
- € *Please do not hand out or receive any mail, money, material articles, etc to any resident or Brother but only to the appointed Brothers-in-charge of the laity.*

***All Donations are to be given only to the Brother In Charge of the Laity upon your arrival.***



## VOLUNTEERS Q & A

### WHAT DOES IT COST?

- **We provide housing, utilities and meals for lay volunteers. You pay only for traveling expenses, including the pick up at the Airport (\$ 20)**
- No money, no tips, no payment will be given to the driver. But is to be given only to the Brother-in-charge upon arrival.
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### HOW DO I APPLY?

- ✓ The first step in becoming an MOP Volunteer is to contact us at any of our locations or e-mail to us at [mopvisitors@missionariesofthepoor.org](mailto:mopvisitors@missionariesofthepoor.org) We would like to discuss some of the guidelines for volunteers and then we will mail you a Volunteer application.

### WHAT WILL I DO?

- ✓ Firstly, You will be sharing in the Spiritual and Religious Life of the Brothers in the Monastery. Secondly you will be ministering (caring and serving) the poor in the shelters run by the Missionaries of the Poor. This involves daily spiritual activities such as Mass & Morning Prayer at 5:45AM - Evening Prayer – 5PM - Night Prayer – 9PM.
- ✓ The works with the poor generally consists of assisted-living care such as bathing and feeding, spending time setting up a room or beds for residents...there are also medical and clinical care and on occasions, there are other works needed as provided by the Brothers and most always hands-on with the poor and needy. Faith sharing, Prayer sharing( Saturday and Sunday afternoon).
- ✓ Tasks in the care centers are always supervised by the brothers--so don't be afraid.

### WHAT DO I NEED?

- ✓ When you visit, we will provide you with everything you need except for your clothing, toiletries, cosmetic needs and reading materials. Expect warm weather, but always dress modestly. For more details, [see our Rules for Visitors](#).

### WHERE WILL I STAY?

- ✓ We maintain a guest house on our property that comfortably houses volunteer groups. Sometimes, men bunk with the brothers in the monasteries themselves.

### WHAT DO I BRING?

- ✓ lightweight clothes ( temp averages 80 - 90 degrees)
- ✓ short-sleeved (not sleeveless) shirts / T-shirts are great
- ✓ clothes you don't mind becoming soiled for working in centers
- ✓ comfortable shoes / sandals and/or tennis shoes you don't mind getting wet
- ✓ mosquito repellent (non-aerosol)
- ✓ sunscreen lotion
- ✓ ear plugs for sleeping
- ✓ camera
- ✓ rosary
- ✓ spiritual reading book and a Bible
- ✓ notebook/journal



## VOLUNTEERS Q & A

### € TIPS FOR THE TRIP?

- ✓ *The usual stay is 5 to 7 days*
- ✓ *Fill out the application with your choice of dates and return the application to us (address below) for approval by the brothers*
- ✓ *Once approved, we will let you know and you can purchase your airfare. Please don't purchase your air transportation until your application has been approved and we have notified you.*
- ✓ *Air fare costs and reservations are the responsibility of the individual volunteer.*
- ✓ *Once you have your itinerary, let us know, so the brothers can pick you up from the airport.*
- ✓ *If you're leading a group it's necessary to notify us of the exact numbers in your group once you've been approved.*
- ✓ *Guests or volunteers are housed on the Monastery grounds.*
- ✓ *Meals are provided by the Brothers and transportation is also provided for travel between the shelters, housing and to and from the airport. There is no cost associated with housing and transportation; however you may want to consider making a donation to MOP, which is not required, only suggested.*
- ✓ *We would like you to think of this trip as a working spiritual retreat.*

### € ORDER OF THE DAY FOR BROTHERS (and also for the laity)

5:30a Rise
<b>5:45a Mass, Morning Prayer</b>
7:30a Meditation
8:15a Breakfast
9:00a Apostolate work at the centers
<b>11:45a Midday Prayer</b>
12:25p Lunch
1:00p Apostolate/Field Work
3:15p Return from Centers to Monastery
<b>5:00p Evening Prayer, Spiritual Dialogue/Reading</b>
6:00p Rosary
7:15p Supper
8:00p Recreation/free time
<b>9:00p Night Prayer</b>
9:15p Sacred Silence
10:00p Sleep



## VOLUNTEERS Q & A

### € GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- ✓ *Female volunteers must be 25 years or older.*
- ✓ *There are no special skill requirements for volunteers, other than a willingness to serve the poor.*
- ✓ *A spirit of quiet is important during your stay.*
- ✓ *The work generally consists of providing for the residents by dressing, bathing and feeding needs. And on occasions, there is other work needed as provided by the Brothers and most always hands-on with the poor and needy.*
- ✓ *Keep in mind, the brothers live very simply. You would be sharing a room and bath with others. Also, there is no hot water and no air-conditioning. There are fans in every room.*

### € MEDICAL AND TRAVEL REQUIREMENT

- ✓ *There are no special immunizations\* required\* for Jamaica, although it is recommended that you have had a tetanus shot within the last ten years.*
- ✓ *The water in Kingston is safe to drink.*
- ✓ *It is also recommended that volunteers frequently apply a good mosquito repellent.*
- ✓ *Each traveler going to Jamaica must have a passport. No Visa required for US & Canadian Passport holders.*

*\*It is always advisable to check the CDC website for current health situations.  
You can learn more by going to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and click on Traveler's Health.*

### *Regarding the booking of tickets:*

*Avoid arrival flights after 8:00 PM. We are Monastic and our gates close at 9:00 PM*

*Avoid departure flights very early in the morning early as 4:00 AM.*





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## MISSIONARIES OF THE POOR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

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**MOP Volunteer Program**—a special missionary journey with the Missionaries of the Poor, founded by Father Richard Ho Lung in the ghettos of Kingston, Jamaica. It is open to any interested members of the clergy, religious institutes, seminaries, schools and the laity in general.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this program is to provide a wholesome missionary experience of the life of free service to the homeless and destitute according to the spirituality of the Missionaries of the Poor.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H): \_\_\_\_\_

(O/Cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number in your group: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of: Males \_\_\_\_\_ Females: \_\_\_\_\_

(let us know the final number of travelers, once your group is complete)

Religion/Church Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested trip dates:

Your 1st choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Your 2nd choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Your 3rd Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first visit to MOP Jamaica?:

*Have you read and understand MOP Monastic Regulations?*

*How did you learn of MOP Volunteer Program?*



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**MISSIONARIES OF THE POOR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

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*Reasons for wanting to take part in the Program:*

*Volunteer Experience:*

*Are you in good health?*

*Do you have any special physical limitations?*

*Briefly describe your life of faith:*



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## CONTACTS

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### JAMAICA

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MISSIONARIES OF THE POOR

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