



# mission

## magazine

WINTER 2022



### **BENQUE AROSE:**

Fr. Beau Schweitzer, SOLT

### **FAMILY LIFE:**

Matthew & Joanna Moore

### **GROWTH AT OUR BORDER MISSION:**

Fr. Tristan Abbott, SOLT





SOCIETY *of* OUR LADY  
of the Most Holy Trinity

A message from the  
**GENERAL  
PRIEST  
SERVANT**



### A Legacy of Faith and Love

*One aspect of life which can seem rather cruel is that it is so much easier and quicker to destroy than it is to build up. Recently, we were reminded of this very clearly when one of our parish mission churches in Papua New Guinea was burned to the ground by a disturbed young man who later confessed his crime. The young man was a drug addict and suffered physical abuse from his family. His stated intention for the arson was to bring down a curse upon himself and his family. Having personally visited the parish, it was particularly devastating to see the images of the church in flames and the ruins left behind.*

*As horrific and disturbing as the act and intention were, I was very edified by the reply of the local Archbishop who said quite*

*simply, "as well as rebuilding the church, we need to develop a drug and alcohol program to help those in need." The act of rebuilding the church will take much longer than the act to burn it to the ground, and hopefully, the act of rebuilding and restoring the disturbed young man will also take place, likely with lots of time, healing, prayer and of course, God's grace!*

*On the flip side of the rapidity of destruction, we have the very slow and laborious process of forming a man to become a priest or religious brother. In SOLT, it is typically a seven to eight year process from entry to ordination. It is a long period of formation, discernment and maturation into Christ. While I sometimes wish it would be a quicker process, the element of time is conducive to proper discernment and indicates the seriousness of the vocation to consecrated*

*SOLT priests  
inspect the  
ruins of  
the parish  
mission church  
destroyed by  
fire in Papua  
New Guinea.*





*Disciples of Jesus through Mary living in Marian-Trinitarian communion, serving on Ecclesial Family Teams in areas of deepest apostolic need*

*life and the priesthood. God willing, in the coming months, there will be eight men in SOLT making their perpetual promises, with seven being ordained as transitional deacons or priests. There will indeed be great cause for rejoicing and celebration for the generosity of these men in responding to God's call and for the great gift of ordained ministry and consecrated life. Please pray for these men as they begin their final preparations!*

*Finally, we also know that it truly takes a full life time to securely build and persevere in a life of loving God and neighbor after the pattern of Jesus Christ. When we pass from this world, our legacy is firmly written in stone. This coming April 23, the SOLT community will be greatly blessed by the monks of St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, Kansas, who will be awarding their prestigious Lumen Vitae award to the co-founders of SOLT, Fr. James Flanagan and Fr. John McHugh. The award*

*recognizes the lifetime of discipleship and service in the Church of Fr. Jim and Fr. John. Indeed, all of us in SOLT are beneficiaries of the legacy of faith, hope and charity that our beloved co-founders built up over the course of their earthly life!*

*Although we live in a world that is often quick to tear down and destroy things of great value, we are also blessed in the Church to be surrounded by a cloud of witnesses who live lives of faith and build up a lasting legacy of goodness and love. May we too find inspiration from the latter and remember that it is always better to light a candle than curse the darkness.*

---

**FR. PETER MARSALEK, SOLT**

Fr. Peter is the General Priest Servant of SOLT. He resides in Corpus Christi, Texas.

## CONTACT INFO

***Director of Mission Advancement***

Sr. Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, SOLT  
P.O. Box 4116, Corpus Christi, TX 78469  
(361) 654-0054 ext 101, [srmarymediatrix@solt.net](mailto:srmarymediatrix@solt.net)  
Website: [solt.net](http://solt.net)

## VOLUNTEER

Sr. Maryam Caritas Sparke, SOLT  
[soltvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:soltvolunteer@gmail.com)  
[www.solt.net/volunteer](http://www.solt.net/volunteer)

## VOCATIONS

***Priests & Brothers Vocations***

Fr. Beau Schweitzer, SOLT  
[vocations@solt.net](mailto:vocations@solt.net)

***Sisters Vocations***

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers, SOLT  
[soltsistersvocations@gmail.com](mailto:soltsistersvocations@gmail.com)

***Lay Vocations***

Rosalie Buegler  
[solt.net/laity](http://solt.net/laity)





# Benque Arose!



***Above:** (From the top) Fr. Beau and volunteers help unload food donations to be distributed; SOLT Missionary Volunteers put packages of food together to give to those in need.*

***I'm chasing a food truck. I leap in*** through the window of the old Ford Ranger because the driver's side door doesn't work. I need those rice and beans.

We cut a deal in front of Jia Wang's restaurant. Per our agreement, Wilmer brings his food truck on Monday. As we unload 2,000 pounds of rice and 2,000 pounds of beans, he stops in the driveway and begins to cry. His eyes look at dozens of hungry people, these 50-pounds sacks, and at me. "I came to Belize with my family; I was 13 and starving. We had hope as we crossed the border from Guatemala, from the war. But there was no work. No food. We lost our hope. But a Catholic priest found us. He saved us, gave us a shack to live in, kept us alive. Now here I am, standing with you, feeding all these people. People like me."

Covid-19 closed the doors of our schools. Some 21 months later, the joy of 1,000 voices at play has yet to resound from Mount Carmel Primary School. Lockdowns. Police in the streets. No leaving home except for pharmacy and fuel, finances and food. Then come armed soldiers. Nobody leaves home on Sundays. Two years in prison is the penalty if they catch you after curfew, moving for unapproved purposes, or outside on a Sunday.

Desperation drives people to risk steep fines and harsh prison sentences. At 4:40am, 20 minutes before curfew lifts, 80 people assemble in the street at the church gate for our 40-family food bundles. The first person I have to turn away says, "What do I say to my baby now? I told her I was leaving to get food so she wouldn't have to cry





“

*Through a time of darkness,  
love begins to triumph.*

any more.” All I give him is a donated piece of bread. That afternoon, I learn one of his daughters is our student at the junior college. Jacqueline responds to my message. “It is okay we didn’t get food, Father. I am just happy that some people are getting something. It helps all of us to see that people care.” The following week, Jacqueline helps us expand our efforts to share faith and frijoles. I apologized again. “Father, that bread was given to my dad with love. And it was enough that we all got to share in that love.” She identified 25 needy families and brought them to the junior college for faith teaching and food bundles. Somehow a moment of sorrow multiplied through relationships into something beautiful for God.

We begin to give. Eventually, 2,500 people receive nourishment from the Church each week—4,000 pounds of rice and of beans! We received a donation of 30,000 bananas. Scores of massive frozen fish. Youth groups sack food. Junior college students give faith talks. The sisters shepherd the peripheries. The volunteer remnant give food everywhere. Carrying food lets us be on the street. Our SOLT initiative swells until 150 parishioners are volunteering. We bring faith and frijoles to the out-of-work needy. Strangers pray together and neighbors serve neighbors. Dawn breaks upon us. Through a time of darkness, love begins to triumph. During the long lockdown in Benque, we could hear the rumble of a slow-rolling stone. In Jesus Christ, Benque arose.



**Above:** (From the top) A donation of 4,000 pounds of bananas helps feed local families in Benque; Before her death, +Sr. Maria of Merciful Love, SOLT, was actively engaged in helping deliver food to those in need.



**FR. BEAU SCHWEITZER, SOLT** Fr. Beau was ordained a priest in 2015. He is originally from Idaho and has been serving in Benque Viejo, Belize since his ordination.





# Family Life: A Call to Holiness

## ***Everybody knows that priests***

and consecrated men and women are called to holiness, so it means a lot to lay people that their vocation to holiness is affirmed in the doctrine of the universal call to holiness. It means that we must, throughout life, see and use the barrage of activities as a way of growing close to our Lord. In this way we can, as we profess in the Creed, truly “look forward to... the life of the world to come” because we have already begun it here, belonging to God in our daily lives as we interact with others. This witness, whether in speech or deed, is the ordinary mission of the lay person in the world. It is a matter of living Christian discipleship with integrity and participating in the sacramentality of the Church in the world.

A particular calling within the lay vocation to holiness is marriage. Spouses belong to each other in marriage, but their belonging to each other does not diminish their belonging to God through the call to holiness so long as spouses each know their own call to holiness and choose to be helpmates to each other. Saint Thomas Aquinas taught that marriage is meant to be “like unto the passion of Christ in its charity, not in its suffering.” Spouses are not meant to be the cross, but Simon of Cyrene for each other. A holy marriage can be happy. In it, God sends spouses on this mission to each other. The execution of this mission by spouses enables marriage to be the sacrament it is called to be, such that the relationship is governed by moral and spiritual growth; such that spouses





“

*As the unity of spouses is strengthened by going outside of itself to serve children, so the communion of the family can be strengthened by family service.*

**Above:** SOLT Sisters, Sr. Mediatrix and Sr. Claire, join the Moore family to cheer on Mary Catherine and Matthew at their last cross country meet of the season.

themselves and others see God working through it; such that God delights to see Himself in it; such that it is life-giving.

No marriage is perfect. As with personal holiness, holiness in marriage is always in progress; often, spouses must backfill the foundations of their relationship. Keeping Christ first, underlying spousal love, adds something – charity – that transforms and perfects the natural elements and ends of marriage. Like Christ reveals man to himself, so He reveals marriage to itself.

Ordinarily, marriages have the additional calling to transmit human life. Since this entails not just having children, but raising them, spouses must establish a family life, a household, ordered to the human, moral, and spiritual growth of children. The goal of that growth is temporal happiness,

understood as not just the pursuit, but the habitual enjoyment of the goods identified in the natural law: life, education, friendship, work, play, religion, the appreciation of beauty. The father and mother, as helpmates, must establish the order and help the children with receptivity to it, so that by a gradual release of responsibility, they become “self-moving,” by God’s grace, towards happiness.

As the unity of spouses is strengthened by going outside of itself to serve children, so the communion of the family can be strengthened by family service. The family is a community of growth, an instrument of grace and salvation for its members, and if those members learn to assist the littlest and least in becoming strong on their own pathway to happiness, a culture of life thrives within it.



**MATTHEW & JOANNA MOORE** have been married since 2005. They have been SOLT lay members since 2014. Their family of seven resides in Corpus Christi, Texas.



# Growth at Our Border Mission



## BUILDING A HOUSE OF GOD

In May of this year, we were hit by a very powerful but very localized thunderstorm. Winds of up to 105 mph were responsible for extensive damage in the city of Nuevo Laredo, Mexico including the complete destruction of our little wooden chapel of Saints Elizabeth and Zechariah (Isabel y Zacharias). Our other four mission churches had already been rebuilt in block and cement and weathered the storm much better, but this one was still awaiting her upgrade. When parishioners sent me their heartfelt condolences upon seeing the destruction, I chuckled to myself, as my first reaction had been, in all honesty, "Well, now I will really have to get a move on with rebuilding!"

I had already been working on a design for the chapel during the first days of the pandemic, when I found myself at loose ends, before we had figured out how to continue working. I had decided to build using locally-made brick. I would have liked stone, but there was no local stone available. The builder, a parishioner, was not enthusiastic, as he said it would take three times the mortar to cement a brick as it would to cement a block! It is true that the work was more expensive than I had estimated but thanks to very generous benefactors I was able to cover the expense and even add the rather extravagant touches (by local standards) of a tiled floor (Saltillo tile) and wooden ceiling (stained plywood). All to the glory of God.



**Above:** (From the top) The newly rebuilt chapel of St. Elizabeth and Zechariah was made possible by generous benefactors; Sr. Angelina, Fr. Tristan, Fr. Patrick, Sr. Veronica and Jocelyne serve the spiritual and corporal needs of the people of Nuevo Laredo.

**FR. TRISTAN ABBOTT, SOLT** was ordained a priest in 2014, and is the pastor of Our Lady of Refuge Parish. He grew up on the Cayman Islands and has been serving in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico since his ordination.





*Above: (Left) Jocelyne treats one of her many patients at the free clinic sponsored by Our Lady of Refuge Parish. (Right) Centro de Salud el Cuerpo de Cristo Clinic is proud to open its doors to the the local community.*

## FREE CLINIC AT THE MISSION OPENS ITS DOORS

El Centro de Salud, Cuerpo de Cristo: This beloved 9-room clinic sits in front of the main SOLT parish in our colonia (neighborhood). Owned by SOLT, the clinic operates on donations and is staffed by volunteers. It has been open on and off for the past 21 years, but had been closed since the beginning of the pandemic. Praise Jesus, the doors are now open wide to all! Currently, our staff includes Brenda, a psychologist, Kimberly, a young tutor that provides educational support for children, LuLu, an energetic nurse, and myself, a Registered Nurse. We offer low-cost or free healthcare for the community Monday-Saturday, and I act as an on-call/home health nurse as well.

A song we hear often at Mass here says simply, “Entra, la puerta está abierta” (“Enter, the door is open”). These words characterize perfectly the Mexican culture, the hospitable and beautifully generous souls of our colonia, and the mission of the clinic. The clinic’s purpose is for all to feel safe and experience encounter with Jesus behind its doors, as we seek Him in each person. This provides the opportunity for a very wide variety of patients to be seen and conditions cared for, from wrapping up fractures or suturing up a deep head laceration, to chronic disease management or medication injections. This special little clinic has witnessed a slew of human life events and emotions, both the sufferings and joys that accompany life in Nuevo Laredo; both the tears of loss, and the celebration of new life. To Jesus be all honor and glory!



**JOCELYNE KLEINSMITH** is a SOLT Missionary Volunteer currently serving as a medical missionary in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. She is a graduate of Benedictine College in Kansas.



# Transformed by Mission

*After my sophomore year of college, I spent a profoundly graced summer serving at the SOLT summer camp in Belcourt, ND: it changed the trajectory of my life.*

I spent every spring and summer break in Belcourt for the remainder of my college years. After graduation, I returned to serve in youth ministry before entering the convent. I loved my time as a volunteer, and I always encourage high school and college students to spend a year or more serving in mission, regardless of what they feel is their vocation, because I have seen and experienced what a time of growth it is.

Several lessons stand out when I consider how that time prepared me for my vocation. These were intellectual truths that I believed with my mind, but had to experience in order to know them in my heart. Grace is real. Jesus wants to work through me to impact the lives of others. I have something to give. I can do nothing without Him. I am not alone. He is always calling me deeper. He is always about his work in my heart and in my life, regardless of what is perceivable. These are truths that He continues to teach me as I seek to love Him and His people for the rest of my life.



**SR. MARY JOY OF OUR FATHER BERNKLAU, SOLT** is originally from Oregon. She professed her final vows in 2017 and is currently serving in Benque Viejo, Belize.





**Opposite page (from top):**

Sr. Joy, with a youth ministry assistant at Most Holy Trinity (MHT) Parish in Phoenix, AZ, where she served from 2015 to 2021.

Sr. Joy serving high school youth group at MHT.

**This Page (from top):**

New volunteers serve the high school youth ministry program during St. Ann's Summer Camp in 2021.

A summer camp participant climbs the rope ladder during free time.

Summer camp volunteers work with children and teens, encouraging them to get involved in a variety of activities, including canoeing on Father's Lake in Belcourt, ND.

**For more information:**

If you, or someone you know, might feel called to serve as a SOLT Missionary Volunteer, use the QR code below or visit [solt.net/volunteer](https://solt.net/volunteer) for more information and to fill out an inquiry form today!



“

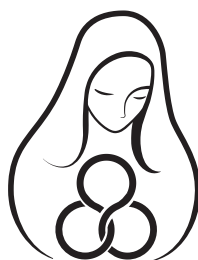
*I loved my time as a volunteer, and I always encourage high school and college students to spend a year or more serving in mission, regardless of what they feel is their vocation, because I have seen and experienced what a time of growth it is.*







**Above:** SOLT Missionary Volunteers help with food distribution in Benque, Belize.



**SOCIETY of OUR LADY**  
of the Most Holy Trinity  
PO Box 4116 • Corpus Christi, TX 78469

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Robstown, TX  
Permit No. 774

## INSIDE

### BENQUE AROSE

Fr. Beau Schweitzer, SOLT

### FAMILY LIFE

Matthew & Joanna Moore

### GROWTH AT OUR BORDER MISSION

Fr. Tristan Abbott, SOLT

### TRANSFORMED BY MISSION

Sr. Mary Joy Bernklau, SOLT



**On the front cover:** SOLT sisters, priests and brothers enjoy prayer and fellowship together in the local park, in Robstown, TX.

**Right:** Generous donations and dedication made the rebuilding of the chapel of St. Elizabeth and Zechariah possible in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico.



**mission**  
magazine WINTER 2022