



St. Elizabeth Mission Society

A Ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, NY

Feast of St. Anthony of Padua 2018

What Are God's Plans for You?

*"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance."
– Ephesians 2:10*

Dear Friend,

The Bible tells us that God knitted us in our mothers' wombs (Psalm 139:19), and that He knows us so intimately that the hairs on our heads have been counted (Luke 12:7). God has known his plans for us from the very beginning.

Have you ever considered that God planned for you to be a missionary? The first thought that may come to mind is baptizing nonbelievers and converting them to Christians. This is an outdated view of evangelization. Mission is now about being rather than doing. Missionaries today build bridges of dialogue, solidarity and collaboration in the name of Jesus.

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of St. Anthony on June 13, I think of Sr. Celestine (see below) who was a missionary in Brazil for almost 70 years. Although it's difficult to draw many parallels between an Italian saint from the Middle Ages and a twentieth-century nun from a working-class family in Niagara Falls, St. Anthony and Sr. Celestine both knew at a young age what God was calling them to do. They were both missionaries dedicated to working with the very poor and bringing the Lord's teachings to them.



"Basic Social Protection for Families, Elderly and the Disabled" is a program offered by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany and their partners in ministry in Anápolis, Brazil.

The Mission Society provides \$300/month to support monthly meetings for handicrafts courses, food, medicines and school supplies. The children pictured here received Christmas presents during a special celebration.



In Loving Memory – Sr. Celestine Fruscione, OSF

March 15, 1925 – January 18, 2018

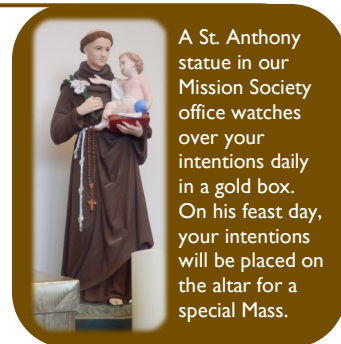
Sr. Celestine was a teacher and principal, and worked in formation and regional leadership during her 72 years as a Franciscan Sister of Allegany. Born to Sicilian immigrant parents and growing up during the Depression, she knew what it was like to be poor. She always felt like this made a difference as she lovingly ministered to those who were poor in Brazil for 68 years. In 1964, she helped start the social assistance program at the main convent in Anápolis, which continues today and is supported by the St. Elizabeth Mission Society.

"Sister treated all those she met with dignity. Her heart was open to everyone, young or old, rich or poor. She was a tiny, quiet woman with a huge heart; a Franciscan to the core." – the Fruscione Family

Persons/Intentions

Please remember the following persons and intentions in the St. Anthony Feast Day Mass at the St. Elizabeth Motherhouse Chapel in Allegany, NY.

- Family Peace Youth Guidance Employment Peace
- Spiritual Help Happy Marriage Motherhood Good Health
- Recovery of Lost items



A St. Anthony statue in our Mission Society office watches over your intentions daily in a gold box. On his feast day, your intentions will be placed on the altar for a special Mass.



ST. ELIZABETH MISSION SOCIETY, INC. • P.O. Box 86, Allegany, NY 14706-0086

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One of our Sisters once told me that “as missionaries, we prepare people for us to leave.” People often feel abandoned, and that’s why it’s important to empower them. Our Sisters work with the people, helping them learn how to sustain themselves. Some of these local people, called partners in ministry work, are staff or volunteers who take a leadership role in continuing this critical missionary activity.

One example of this is Sr. Celestine’s efforts to start a social assistance program at the main convent in Anápolis 50 years ago. She told me, during my visit to Brazil, that she used to give cans of food to people who came to the convent door. One day, the archbishop came and asked why she didn’t give them the rice, oil and other the things they needed so they could do it themselves. She said, “How can I do that? I don’t have the wherewithal.” He told her he could help and began sending donations.

The Sisters and their partners in ministry still continue to help in the same way today. Every month, they host meetings at the convent. Community volunteers offer courses on handicrafts, garbage recycling and cultivating family vegetable gardens. The people who attend receive food baskets, medicines and school supplies for children. The meetings strengthen family ties and renew self-esteem.

God presents many ways we can be missionaries. All we have to do is listen. On St. Anthony’s Feast Day, we will offer a Mass in thanksgiving for all the blessings, graces and gifts received from God through his intercession. Please list your concerns on this form so that we may place your intentions on the altar.

In the name of those who are poor,

Laura C. Whitford

Laura Whitford
President, St. Elizabeth Mission Society



L-R: Laura Whitford, Sr. Pat Tyre, Elsa, Sr. Odette Haddad and Elsa’s grandson.

Elsa’s Story

Elsa was left to care for her four grandchildren when her daughter abandoned them. A regular participant in the monthly meetings at the Sisters’ main convent in Anápolis, she said, “They treat us very well. I can’t wait for the day to come to go.” The day of the meeting, she gets to the bus stop at 5 a.m. to wait an hour for a bus that will take her on a 10-minute ride to the convent. Once there, she spends over two hours making crafts, eating, socializing and praying. She leaves with clothes and some food to take home.

Mission Society funds provided her with a new door (pictured), as well as ongoing support for the monthly meetings.



Meeting participants make items they can sell to earn supplemental income, or for some, their only income.



Children receive school supplies.



Yes! I would like to help the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany reach out to those who are poor in Jamaica, Brazil, Bolivia and the U.S.

I am enclosing my gift of: \$200 \$50
 \$150 \$30
 \$100 Other \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **St. Elizabeth Mission Society**

What’s your legacy?

Please consider including the **St. Elizabeth Mission Society** in your estate planning. Naming us as a beneficiary in your will, life insurance policy or retirement plan will further our work for future generations.

E-mail _____

Phone _____

Donations can also be made on our website,
www.FranciscanHope.org,
 using **PayPal** or via **PayPal Giving Fund** at
www.paypal.com/fundraiser/hub.