



neighbors

SUMMER 2004

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM MISSION AMERICA

From Africa to Utah *A Missionary in the Home Missions*

Father Albert Kileo was ordained in 1992 in Tanzania, a priest of a small missionary order popularly known as the Holy Spirit Fathers. His first assignment often kept him away from his parish and on the roads of east Africa for months at a time.

This experience prepared him well for his current ministry, pastor of St. Helen Parish in Roosevelt, Utah.

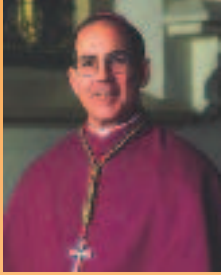
"The Church was meant to be missionary, with different communities sharing their charisms and gifts with others," Fr. Kileo explains. For him, the Church is a global communion, where Catholic Africa can touch and strengthen Catholic America.

The Utah missions typically serve few families and may be hours apart even where travel is easy. Roosevelt is a multicultural community of 3,200 people, largely white and Native

American, in the northeast corner of the state. Most folks in town are Mormons, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As in other places where Catholics are a distinct minority, St. Helen parishioners must have a sympathetic understanding of other faith traditions.

As small as it is, St. Helen Parish has its own missions: Holy Spirit Parish in Duchesne, which serves 30 families; and the Blessed Kateri

From The Chairman



Dear Friends,

Utah is a beautiful state, home to some of the most spectacular scenery in the United States. Salt Lake City itself lies on the western edge of the Wasatch Front, a range of towering peaks that offer you everything from fascinating mountain drives to first-class skiing. In the south lie the famous canyonlands, where erosion has sculpted limestone and sandstone into saw-toothed ridges and soaring spires collectively known as “hoodoos.” Travel west from Salt Lake City toward Nevada, and you find yourself in the

flat, blinding waste of the Bonneville Salt Flats. Travel through the center of the state, and you see grassy hills rolling to the horizon.

The Catholic Church in Utah, though relatively modest, also has its dramatic features. Catholicism is the largest faith community in the state after Mormonism, and the striking Cathedral of the Madeleine lies just a few blocks from Temple Square in Salt Lake City. Its intricately decorated interior, where graceful columns spiral upward in bands of color, combines classic architectural elements with a freedom of design that speaks of the frontier West.

Catholic churches are much plainer in Utah’s 85,000 square miles of open country and in the little towns scattered like tumbleweed across the land. In such places, a Catholic parish can be hard to find. Most churches are very unassuming structures that seat a couple of hundred people for Sunday Mass. Some are actually converted houses set in quiet neighborhoods away from Main Street, perhaps with an altar in the living room and a few rows of pews fitted to the available space. If the congregation has grown over the years and the collection has been high enough, there might be an addition to accommodate the expanded membership.

The Diocese of Salt Lake City, established in 1891, is active and well-respected. Though Catholics make up about 9 percent of a growing population, this is still mission territory.

The Committee on the Home Missions (CHM) helps struggling parishes like St. Helen Catholic Church, with its 76 households. CHM also supports the education of the diocese’s seminarians and deacons, the diocesan newspaper, and the diocese’s Hispanic ministry program. (Like most places in home mission America, Utah welcomes more and more Hispanic Catholics every year.)

The remarkable ministry of Tanzanian Fr. Albert Kileo highlights a new and increasingly important aspect of Catholic life: its unity across the globe. The Committee on the Home Missions is proud to help dioceses like Salt Lake City forge bonds between Catholics here and abroad, making the unity of the Church not an abstraction, but a warm and personal reality.

† Most Rev. J. Peter Sartain
Bishop of Little Rock
Chairman
Committee on the Home Missions



Established in 1891, the Diocese of Salt Lake City covers the entire 85,000-square-mile state of Utah.

Catholics are a small minority in a state where the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is extremely prominent. There are 200,000 Catholics—about 9% of Utah’s population of 2.3 million.

The diocese has only 63 priests to serve 48 parishes and 27 missions. Of Utah’s 29 counties, only 16 have parishes with a resident priest. Twelve counties have mission churches without pastors, and one has no Catholic presence at all.

There are no Catholic colleges in Utah, so the training of mission lay leaders and religious education teachers for small-town parishes is a special challenge.

Grant money from the Bishops’ Committee on the Home Missions supports sacramental life and religious education for Catholics in 13 mission parishes throughout Utah. These missions serve anywhere from five to 200 Catholics.

Remember the Missions

Donations are very much appreciated. Checks may be made to: *Committee on the Home Missions (CHM)*

Please consider support for the work of the Committee on the Home Missions in your estate planning. Bequests may be made to: *The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, for the exclusive purpose of assisting Roman Catholic home mission dioceses in the United States.*



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Tekakwitha Center on the Duchesne Ouray Indian Reservation in the next county, which serves just three families. "Being a missionary means being flexible," said Fr. Kileo, whose weekend travels may also include Mass at the city jail in Duchesne. During the week, Fr. Kileo celebrates Mass daily at St. Helen, and offers Mass and leads the rosary on Wednesdays at the Tekakwitha Center.

Fr. Kileo is not the only member of his Tanzanian religious community to come to Utah. Fr. Protas Swai is pastor of St. James in Vernal, Utah.

There is a story that Brigham Young sent a scouting party to the Uintah Basin in 1861, only to be told that the land was good for nothing but "to hold the world together." Nevertheless, Vernal became a town in 1897, and it survives today as a base for tourists visiting nearby Dinosaur National Monument. St. James serves about 265 Catholic households, a thriving community by local standards.

With only 63 priests for 48 parishes and 27 missions, Bishop George Niederauer, head of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, has brought in priests not only from Tanzania but also from Columbia, Brazil, India, and Poland to minister in Utah's small towns. Without their dedicated service, churches like St. Helen would have no resident priest. "These priests from Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa bring such a wealth of faith, joy, and experience to us. They remind us of our global roots as Catholics and help us see beyond our Church here in Utah," the bishop says.

Staffing mission parishes will continue to challenge the resourcefulness



Father Albert Kileo, a missionary from Africa, serving at St. Helen Parish in Duchesne, Utah.

of mission bishops. While international missionaries' serving in the United States might strike some people as unusual, Fr. Kileo has a simple explanation: "I am paying back for the missionaries who came to Africa from Europe and the United States. I am following the example of the first missionary, who was Jesus himself. Remember that he, too, left his home." ■

CHM is grateful to Barbara Lee Stinson, editor of Intermountain Catholic, for her assistance with this article.



Pastors in small mission parishes face many of the same problems as do priests everywhere but also struggle constantly with a lack of resources. Here are some ways you can give your brother priests a much-needed boost.

- When the Sunday readings suggest it, note in your homilies that care for the home missions is an important (and much-neglected) aspect of Catholic spirituality.
- Devote one of the Prayers of the Faithful to hard-working priests in mission dioceses, like Fr. Kileo and Fr. Swai in the Diocese of Salt Lake City.
- Order additional copies of *Neighbors* free of charge for adult education groups and RCIA programs by calling 202-541-3450.
- When the Catholic Home Missions Appeal occurs in your parish, explain it during Mass. Many Catholics have no idea that there are poor missions right here in the United States.





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• COMMITTEE ON THE HOME MISSIONS • **Who Are We?**

The bishops' Committee on the Home Missions was founded as the American Board of Catholic Missions in 1924. In cooperation with the Black and Indian Missions Board (1885) and the Catholic Church Extension Society (1905), the Committee provides financial support for missionary activities that strengthen and extend the presence of the Church in the United States and its island territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific. The principal beneficiaries of the annual Catholic Home Missions Appeal are approximately eighty-five home mission dioceses, which include the Eastern Catholic Church eparchies.

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We invite you to take an Internet journey to a few of our home missions and learn what's happening in their parts of the country. Just log on to www.usccb.org/hm and click on **Stories and Pictures from the Field**.