Join Us on Our Mission Immersion Trip

When: January 3rd - 11th, 2020
Where: La Paz, Bolivia
Cost: $2,450.00
Trip Capacity: 22 participants

Fees Include: Round trip airfare, transportation in Bolivia, hotel lodging, and food.

Personalized payment schedules are available by request. For more information, visit: www.archstl.org/mission-trip

With more than forty priests from the Archdiocese of St. Louis having served in the Latin America Apostolate (LAA) since 1956, the ties between St. Louis and Bolivia run deep. Over the years, our priests have ministered at five different parishes in Bolivia and one in Chile. Currently, we serve at Maria Reina Parish in La Paz, and it was at Maria Reina where I was blessed to spend five years with Fr. Patrick Hayden and Fr. James Michler. The relationships developed and the time spent there have transformed me, and the same can be said for all of our missionaries.

Thankfully, the opportunity to spend time in our mission is not limited to clergy or religious, and both the pilgrimage with Archbishop Burke in 2006 for the golden jubilee of the Apostolate and the mission immersion trip last year have given the faithful a glimpse of the beauty and importance of the LAA. The trips have also provided opportunities to share one’s love of Christ with others, and this has proven to be mutually enriching. Just like our priest missionaries, the participants in these trips have said that they truly received much more than they gave. Such are the blessings of sharing our faith in Jesus!

In this light, we at the Mission Office are thrilled to offer the opportunity to almost two dozen adults of any age group to spend time sharing faith and food with those on the streets of La Paz, visiting children in an orphanage supported by Pan y Amor, participating in Mass with parishioners at Maria Reina, and engaging in hands-on learning about the past and present of our archdiocesan mission. It is my joy and privilege to invite you to accompany us to Bolivia in January. If you have any questions about the trip or anything related to our Latin America Apostolate, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please keep the LAA along with Fr. Hayden and Fr. Michler in your daily prayers, and be assured of my prayers for you as well.
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During each of my two visits to our archdiocesan mission in Bolivia, the faith of the parishioners of Maria Reina (Mary Queen Parish) has inspired me. When distributing Holy Communion to the faithful during Mass, I could see the face of Christ in their faces. Their toil and hardships were evident, but even more pronounced was their peace and joy when receiving our Lord. On a deep level, they knew that heaven comes to earth in the Mass, and that their true joy is found in God. Please join with me in praying for these dear brothers and sisters in Christ, and in supporting the pastoral work of our St. Louis priests who serve them.

Our archdiocesan mission also tends to the distressing needs of individuals who cannot afford basic medical care, dental care, or even provide food for their families at times. Through the Health Clinic and social outreach programs, your generosity transforms the lives of thousands of people each year. Young people can prepare for the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation, receive tutoring and a hot meal, and participate in formation as missionary disciples. The elderly come together to celebrate life, grow in faith, and receive assistance with food and medicine if necessary. Couples prepare for Marriage, families baptize their children, and adults are received into the Church at Easter all because of your support.

No one is more supportive of the Latin America Apostolate, however, than Father Patrick Hayden and Father James Michler, who have been shepherding Maria Reina Parish and its chapels of Cristo Redentor (Christ the Redeemer) and Cristo Rey (Christ the King) for more than 25 years. Please join me in supporting these heroic priests and our archdiocesan mission by including them in your daily prayers and by generously supporting the Latin America Apostolate. As always, please be assured of my prayers for you and gratitude for your generosity.

Invoking every blessing upon you, I remain, yours truly,

Archbishop Robert J. Carlson

Archdiocese of St. Louis
Latin America Apostolate
August 3rd & 4th

Our Missionaries

**Fr. Patrick Hayden**  
*Pastor, Maria Reina*

Ordained in 1990, Fr. Hayden enjoyed 3 wonderful years of priesthood at Ascension Parish in Chesterfield before going to Bolivia. Most of his 29 years of priesthood have been spent at Maria Reina, where he is now the beloved pastor.

**Fr. James Michler**  
*Associate Pastor, Maria Reina*

Fr. Michler has served as a priest for 44 years and was previously assigned to St. Cecilia, St. Casimir, St. Angela Merici, Our Lady of Sorrows, the St. Louis Cathedral, and St. Dominic Savio. He has spent more than 25 years of service at Maria Reina in La Paz, Bolivia, where he continues to minister with great joy.
In October 2019, Pope Francis has convened the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region. The Pan-Amazon Region is made up of nine countries, one of them being Bolivia. The Synod will discuss the ecological crisis occurring in the Amazon and its ramifications for the entire planet. Additionally, this Synod will address evangelization efforts in the Pan-Amazon Region. Earlier this year, Bishop Eugenio Coter, Vicar Apostolic of Pando, Bolivia and one of the Pre-Synodal Council members came to speak in St. Louis and share his perspective on the upcoming Synod. In his overview, he identified issues facing the environment and explained how desperately this region is in need of the Gospel. For example, a village in the Pan-Amazon region went 18 years without the celebration of Mass because of the shortage of priests.

While the shortage of priests in the Archdiocese of La Paz (where our missionaries serve) is not this extreme, the Synod draws attention to evangelization throughout Latin America. In 2016 in La Paz, there were only 137 priests for 873,402 Catholics, which comes out to be 6,375 Catholics per priest. In 2016 Statistics, http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dlapz.html). To provide some perspective, in 2016 in the Archdiocese of St. Louis, for 515,251 Catholics, there were 595 priests which comes to 865 Catholics per priest (2016 Statistics, http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dstlo.html). In 1956, St. Louis was the first archdiocese to answer the call to send missionaries to Bolivia due to the lack of native priests. While the situation has improved, the country is still in need, and it is because of this that the Latin America Apostolate continues to serve.

In his Message for World Mission Day 2019, Pope Francis says, “The Special Synod on the Churches in the Amazon allows me to emphasize how the mission entrusted to us by Jesus with the gift of his Spirit is also timely and necessary for those lands and their peoples. A renewed Pentecost opens wide the doors of the Church, in order that no culture remain closed in on itself and no people cut off from the universal communion of the faith.” Let us continue to take these words to heart, asking the Lord for a renewed missionary zeal that we may be just as concerned about the universal Church as our local Church and always trust the Lord’s words, “Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give” (Mt 10:8).

Preparations are underway for our next mission trip to the Latin America Apostolate, occurring January 3rd-11th, 2020! After the success of the first mission trip in June 2018, the office is excited to be able to offer this opportunity again. Instead of the previous trip only being open to young adults, this trip is open to any adults 18 years of age and older. Additionally, the trip will accommodate a larger group, allowing for a total of 22 people to attend. Participants on this week long mission trip will be immersed in the life of Maria Reina Parish. Alongside the Maria Reina parishioners, the St. Louisans will participate in the sacramental life of the parish as well as acts of service, such as preparing meals and distributing them to the poor on the streets of La Paz.

The hope of this mission trip and each mission trip offered through our office is that the parishioners of Maria Reina and participants from St. Louis will grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church throughout the world, as “the proper purpose of this missionary activity is evangelization” (Decree Ad Gentes, 6). While Maria Reina Parish is a part of the Archdiocese of La Paz, it is also a part of the Archdiocese of St. Louis since it is administered by our archdiocesan priests and supported by the sacrifices of St. Louisans. On a deeper level, all of us have been baptized into Christ. The parishioners at Maria Reina are our brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, and we are to strive “so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy” (1 Cor 12:25-26).

For more information or to register, please call (314) 792-7655 or visit www.archstl.org/mission-trip.
Thank you for your generosity!

Ways to give...
- Using the giving envelope provided
- Online at https://giving.archstl.org
- In your parish collection on **August 3rd & 4th**
- Through your parish online giving

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