



Thank you for sending these missionaries to serve in Europe!



on mission with FOCUS

A Newsletter for FOCUS Supporters

September 30, 2022

A saint in the making!

Read more about the canonization process that has begun for former FOCUS missionary, Michelle Duppong, inside!



YOU ARE TAKING THE GOSPEL TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

The Great Commission is being fulfilled with your care. Your love is inviting students into the communion of love that God offers them through the Catholic Church.

The Lord commands us, His followers, to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19-20). His command to go on mission with Him is grounded in God’s love for us, for “the ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love” (CCC 341).

When He ascended, Jesus left the disciples with a game plan. He instructed them, “be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). First, the disciples invited those who were, in a sense, closest to Jesus — the Jews. Then, they went out to the lost tribes of Israel in the surrounding geographic area. Finally, they

encountered non-Jewish peoples, the Gentiles, as they went on mission to foreign lands.

As the Lord calls “all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” (Rev 7:9), who is He asking you to encounter with His love where you are? Is there a particular group of people — prisoners, the hungry, the poor, the lonely — who are waiting for you to share His love with them?

You are going to foreign lands with FOCUS missionaries. Like the disciples, some FOCUS missionaries are placed on new expansion campuses each year. Some are commissioned to serve physically “unreachable” students through digital mission. Others serve city-wide. Still others courageously travel to different countries to serve at FOCUS’ international campuses. Thank you for extending Jesus’ invitation for hope and healing through all of these forms of mission!

YOU ARE EXPANDING THE MISSION TO NEW CAMPUSES

"I am excited to serve at an expansion campus because it is truly a new beginning. ... **This is a new beginning for the mission of FOCUS**, a new battlefield for souls in the great spiritual battle. And my team and I get to be the first, of hopefully many, FOCUS missionaries to be soldiers on this campus. **We will be the first face of FOCUS to most students we meet.** The year will be a constant state of winning students, even the ones involved in campus ministry, to who and what FOCUS is, which I am looking forward to!

"The example that our team sets for the campus is critical as new habits and ideas form quickly but can be hard to change. This brings many added opportunities but also added pressure! **We as a team are thrilled to be a great force for change** and to set the bar high for students as to how to live as Christ-reliant missionary disciples."

NOAH ORHAM, TEAM DIRECTOR AT THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY



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"I was a student at Indiana University when our first FOCUS team arrived, and being a part of that transition gave me a heart for this particular mission. I know that this understanding of our apostolate and **this invitation to mission changes lives.** It is such an honor to be the 'long-awaited FOCUS team' for which this community has been hoping."



JACKIE PARKES, TEAM DIRECTOR AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-
STEVENS POINT

A RADIANT AND JOYFUL WITNESS: MICHELLE CHRISTINE DUPPONG



Bishop David Kagan, Diocese of Bismarck, N.D., announced the opening of the diocesan investigation, which could lead to the beatification and canonization of North Dakota native Michelle Christine Duppong. At the age of 31, Duppong passed away from cancer in 2015 while serving as the Director of Adult Faith Formation for the Diocese of Bismarck. Before that, Duppong had served as a FOCUS missionary for six years.

Bishop Kagan made the announcement at the FOCUS New Staff Training at the University of Mary, saying, “Michelle’s holiness of life and love for God certainly touched us here in the Diocese of Bismarck, at the University of Mary, and throughout FOCUS, but hers is a witness which should also be shared with the Universal Church.” The video of the full announcement is at focus.org/michelleduppong.

Born in 1984, Duppong grew up in Haymarsh, N.D. She earned a degree in horticulture at North Dakota State University in 2006. While there, she encountered FOCUS and was so inspired by the apostolate that after graduation she served as a FOCUS missionary. For six years, Duppong mentored hundreds of students in college, with her final assignment on the inaugural FOCUS team at the University of Mary.

In 2012, Duppong became the Director of Adult

Faith Formation for the Diocese of Bismarck, using her missionary zeal to bring others closer to Christ. On December 29, 2014, Duppong was unexpectedly diagnosed with cancer and battled the disease with perseverance and a patient, cheerful spirit, passing from this life on December 25, 2015.

“... hers is a witness which should also be shared with the Universal Church.”

BISHOP DAVID KAGAN, DIOCESE
OF BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

“Michelle was a radiant, joyful woman with the heart of a true servant,” said Monsignor James Shea, president of the University of Mary. “For the students on our campus, she was an inspiration and a treasured mentor, teaching them by her example the transformative power of friendship with God.”

A RADIANT AND JOYFUL WITNESS:

“Michelle’s daily ‘yes’ to Jesus and her obedience to the Lord’s will, even in the smallest things, has had a tremendous impact on so many lives,” said Curtis Martin, founder of FOCUS. “Michelle was a missionary of joy and that joy is continuing to change lives. She lived everyday faithfulness extraordinarily well, and her authentic witness to the Gospel shows us all what it means to be transformed in, with, and through Christ.”

The diocesan investigation, which involves the gathering of evidence about Michelle’s life and deeds, will include witness testimonies and the compilation of private and public writings. When this is completed, the next stage towards the Cause for Beatification and Canonization is for the evidence to be presented by the diocese to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints at the Vatican. If the documentation is accepted for consideration, Michelle would then be considered a “Servant of God.” From there, the cause could proceed at a steady pace, especially if there are no theological objections and Duppong enjoys what the Church calls “the fame of sanctity” — that she is venerated as a holy person — and there are one or more miracles attributed to her intercession.

A documentary entitled *Thirst for Souls: the Michelle Duppong Story* debuted at the FOCUS New Staff Training.



“Michelle was a radiant, joyful woman with the heart of a true servant.”

MONSIGNOR JAMES SHEA,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF MARY



View the full announcement at focus.org/michelleduppong.

YOU ARE REACHING THE LOST THROUGH DIGITAL OUTREACH



“When the pandemic hit in 2020, I was working as the team director at the University of Southern California. Within a week, we went from normal, in-person functioning, to a fully digital platform ... **I became convicted that souls can be effectively reached through online means.** I followed this conviction that digital outreach was a real need and began working with the Digital Outreach Team. We help students to encounter Jesus and teach them to make Him known on their campuses. Even though we aren’t there, they are, and **if we can reach them, they can reach their campuses.** I love that we can be in places where there is an unmet need, raising up disciples where there otherwise may not be many. **Through the Digital Outreach Team, we can really transform the world for Jesus Christ at a rapid pace and with great effectiveness.**”

KATT REDMOND, DIGITAL OUTREACH MISSIONARY



“Christ gives us an imperative charge: Go forth to the ends of the earth and proclaim the Gospel. **Serving digitally allows me to actually take the Gospel truth out to places not yet served by a FOCUS team on the ground.** As a digital missionary I am able to connect with even more campuses, which furthers our apostolate’s answer to Christ’s call.

“There are so many young people who are thirsting for Christ but don’t know it. I find it thrilling and humbling to be able to reach out to these lost sheep both remotely and in person. **The students I work with are longing to see the face of God in another.** By the generosity of mission partners like you, I am able to be that face for them.

“Serving digitally has allowed me the great opportunity **to see real and impactful growth** in individual students as well as many campus ministry programs. I’m grateful to be a part of that process!”

ANTHONY SLOAN, DIGITAL OUTREACH MISSIONARY

YOU ARE SERVING IN CITIES AND COUNTRIES ACROSS THE WORLD



"I felt deeply that the Lord was calling me to drop everything and follow Him no matter where He wanted to send me. Fulfilling the Great Commission includes going out to the entire world, and I have felt that call more radically over my time as a missionary. After spending the previous five years in England, my zeal for international mission has only increased. **In Europe, the Church needs missionaries proclaiming the Gospel more than ever** — that is why I have stayed for such a long time. It is such a gift to be able to be sent so far from home to humbly serve this mission."

SHEA MCMAHON, TEAM DIRECTOR AT QUEENS UNIVERSITY BELFAST

"Boston Beta is an exciting opportunity to accompany more students in the Boston area through a radical mission. I am looking forward to playing a role in creating a new mission format for cities that have a large college student population, such as Boston. The Archdiocese of Boston has around 70 campuses total and 35 within Boston city limits. My teammate and I will initially be reaching out to and walking with students in mentorship at three campuses, and two of the missionaries from FOCUS' Digital Outreach team will team up with us to remotely reach out to students at several other campuses in the surrounding area. **Boston Beta is a great opportunity to bring more souls to Christ by seeing the city of Boston as our campus.** This new format also encourages students to continue to be on mission to their campus on the days my teammate and I are serving another school."

CASSIE POWELL, TEAM DIRECTOR FOR OUTREACH IN BOSTON, MA



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