



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE REV. THOMAS FURRER

Responding to the Pandemic



The COVID-19 crisis has affected all of our lives in many ways. And it has affected our work in Nigeria. As you probably know, the pandemic has now arrived in Nigeria and is taking off rapidly. The people our clinics serve — the urban and rural poor, living on less than \$ 1.70 per day — are particularly vulnerable. Physical distancing is virtually impossible when entire families share one room for sleeping and multiple families share the same toilets and cooking facilities. When the virus hits these densely packed conditions, it will spread like wild fire.

Our six medical clinics are on the front line of this crisis in urban and rural settings. Our clinic staff are first responders for poor people who cannot afford to pay market rates for medical care. The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has established isolation centers throughout the country to deal with COVID-19 cases. However, our clinics are required to care for the patient until the NCDC team arrives

to transport the patient. This can take as long as 48 hours and will extend to longer periods when the NCDC system is overwhelmed.

Kateri Medical Services has developed a strategy to help our clinics to respond to this crisis which will probably overwhelm the entire health care infrastructure very soon.

First, we have canceled all of our medical outreach missions for spring and summer of 2020. We had planned four, one-week missions in April, May and June. We decided that these would be harmful to our staff and patients as they typically attract thousands of patients and it would be impossible to observe prescribed physical distancing.

Second, we have redirected our mission funds to purchase PPEs



for all of our clinic staff, and other equipment to facilitate more sanitary conditions for patients and staff in our clinics.

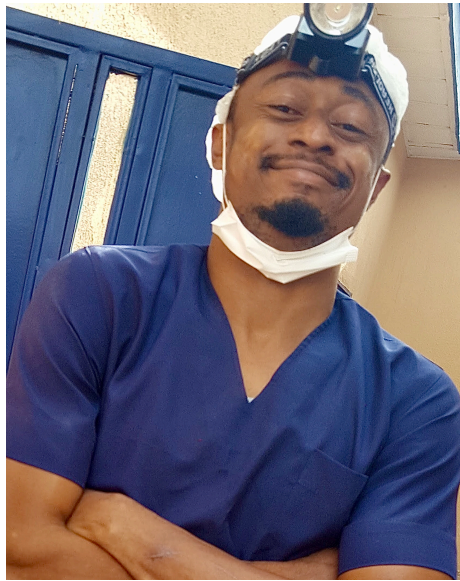
Third, we will purchase equipment (to the extent our resources allow) to help our clinics treat COVID-19 patients. This equipment will include oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators, ventilators, N-95 masks, regular face masks for all patients and other sanitary equipment.

Fourth, when possible, we will designate areas for isolation of COVID-19 patients. This will minimize exposure of non-COVID-19 patients to infection. And it will prepare for the probability that NCDC centers will be overwhelmed and our clinics will care for COVID-19 patients for longer terms.

Fifth, we will subsidize the cost of test kits and medicine to help all COVID-19 patients. Our normal practice is to require patients to pay for their own medicine and pay a small fee to be consulted. As long as we are able, we will subsidize those who are not able to pay the consultation fee or for their drugs.

The rural and urban poor people we serve in Nigeria are very vulnerable. The government health care infrastructure does not serve them very well in the best of times — and these are not good times. We will do everything in our power and with our available resources to help them. Now, more than ever, we need your help. Please help us if you are able.

Voices of Our Partners in All Parts of Nigeria



Dr. Arome Okeme, Medical Director at Arthur and Esther Bradley Memorial Anglican Hospital in Gidan Waya in southern Kaduna State in “the middle belt” of central Nigeria.

“The COVID-19 pandemic rages on with cases rising astronomically daily. Precariously, Kaduna is bordered by six states, all of which have reported cases with the highest number of deaths. With community spread already reported, it is only a matter of time before cases come knocking at facilities in rural settings, our own not exempted.”

Dr. Arome Okeme

“It is horrible here. Many, many people are infected with coronavirus and it is spreading rapidly. Many private hospitals are closing to prevent the spread of disease to other patients. Government officials are not reporting the cases, but it is affecting a lot of people. ...We have to be very careful who we admit at our hospital. If they have the virus, we don’t admit them, but refer them to the NCDC centers. We are just not equipped to handle their cases and help them. We are very grateful for any help you can give us. We are relying on the mercy of God.”

Bishop John Danbita



Bishop John Danbita, bishop of Gusau Diocese and CEO of Graceland Hospital in Gusau, the capitol of Zamfara State in northern Nigeria.



Dr. Olaniyi Olaobaju, Medical Director of St. Thomas Clinic, Eleme District of Port Harcourt in Rivers State in southwestern Nigeria.

“The virus is spreading faster here than official reports acknowledge. We know that many vagrants on the street have tested positive, even if official statistics have not reflected this. Unfortunately, the nature of the disease makes it undetectable unless one is tested or there is an underlying health problem, like heart or lung disease. This is all the more reason why we must take precautions to protect our staff and our patients.”

Dr. Olaniyi Olaobaju

“Things are getting pretty difficult around the whole country. Here in Lagos, where the health care infrastructure is pretty advanced, the NCDC centers are working pretty well. But in the less-developed parts of the country, where all of our clinics are, conditions are much more dire.

Any help you can bring will make a big difference.”

Helen Victor



Helen Victor, Nurse at Genesis Hospital in Lagos and Mission Team Coordinator for Kateri Medical Services in Nigeria.

New Van for Mobile Clinic Outreach Missions St. Thomas Clinic, Port Harcourt

Our 2020 support to St. Thomas Clinic in Eleme District of Port Harcourt is to purchase a van to facilitate mobile clinics to rural areas with no access to medical care and to fund the salary of one doctor to lead the outreach efforts. The van has been purchased. We are still searching for the right doctor for this assignment.

As with all of our other plans for 2020, this process has been disrupted by the pandemic, but we hope to find someone as soon as possible. The van has already been used on its first Mobile Medical Clinic Outreach from March 16 to 20 at a Goshen Retreat Centre in Owerri, in Imo State.



New Partner Clinic in Bari Diocese



In April 2020, we began a relationship with our newest partner clinic, The B.B. Ayam Memorial Clinic and Maternity. We have begun a partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Bari under the leadership of Bishop Idris Zubairu. Bari Diocese is located in Kano State, in the north of Nigeria where Christians are a small and persecuted minority in a majority Muslim context.

When we choose partners for clinics, we require the local partner to have “skin in the game”. We want our partners to provide some of their own resources (land, buildings, funds and people) to join with our contributions. In this case, the clinic building had already been built and equipped by another partner several years ago. Because of many adverse economic conditions, the Anglican Diocese was no longer able to pay their medical staff at the clinic.

Kateri Medical Services will be providing funds to pay a small staff and to purchase medicine. In the future, we hope to conduct Medical Outreach Missions here as we do in our other five clinics.

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As we write this newsletter, we realize that times are difficult for many of our fellow Americans. Many of us have lost jobs and our investment resources are also reduced. To all of our supporters, we want to say a big “thank you” for all you have done to support our work in the past. With your help, we have helped thousands of people with medical care every year since 2003.

If you are not able to help us financially at this time, we understand, and once again, we say “thank you” for all you have done in the past. We will also ask you to continue helping us by praying for our work every day. Prayer is the “rocket fuel” that has propelled our work for the past 17 years.

We are utterly dependent on God and we know it.

If you are able to help us financially at this time, please be as generous as you can. We are helping the poorest of the poor in Nigeria. With your help, we will save many vulnerable lives and demonstrate the love of God by continuing the healing work of Jesus in this broken and hurting world.

*Rev. Tom Furrer
President and Executive Director*