

***“For everything
there is a season...”***



**Missionaries
of the
Sacred Heart**
MSC MISSIONS

A letter from the Irish Provincial Superior

Dear mission friends,

I am writing today to share the news that, after 22 years as Director of the MSC Missions Office, Fr Michael O’Connell MSC will be standing down from this post in the new year.

I am glad to be able to tell you that Fr John Fitzgerald MSC will be stepping into the role of Director; having worked in close proximity with the Missions Office for many years now, I know that Fr John will bring with him many gifts and will be a wonderful addition to the team there.

As it is written in Ecclesiastes, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven” (3:1-2) - and with the dawn of the new year comes a new season for the MSC Missions Office.

I’m sure you will join me in thanking Fr Michael, most sincerely, for all that he has done to help our Missions Office contribute to the work of our MSC communities all over the world, playing its part in feeding the hungry, helping the poor, building schools and churches, and ministering to those affected by natural disasters and, most recently, the coronavirus pandemic. This work has played a vital role in enabling us to grow and expand the support we offer to our own Irish mission projects and those of other Provinces around the MSC world.

Fr Michael has built a very close and special relationship with our mission friends; while I know that we will all feel his absence keenly, we are very grateful for having had the benefit of his warmth, his energy, and his enthusiasm, and I am sure that you will echo me in wishing him all the very best on this new chapter of his life.

Fr Michael will be working closely with Fr John as we look ahead to this new beginning, making sure that the transition will be a smooth, pleasant, and successful one for everybody.

Once again, I would like to extend sincere thanks to Fr Michael, along with a heartfelt congratulatory welcome to Fr John on his new appointment. We look forward to embarking on this new path together with you, our mission friends, as we continue on our shared journey to make the Sacred Heart of Jesus everywhere loved.



*With my prayers and very best wishes,
Fr Carl Tranter MSC,
Irish Provincial Superior*

**United in faith,
we will continue to work together
to shine the light of God’s love where it is needed most.**

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved.

Please turn to the back of the page to read messages from Fr Michael and Fr John.

A message from Fr Michael

My dear friends,

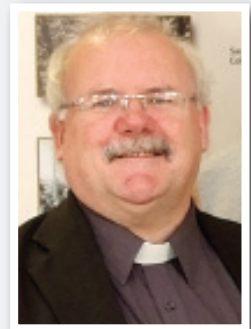
Having spent the past 22 years as Director of the MSC Missions Office, it is now my time to move on, to prepare to pass the baton over to the very capable hands of Fr John Fitzgerald MSC, and to contemplate the beginning of a new season on my missionary journey.

It has been an honour and a privilege to spend such a long time in this role, not least because of the opportunity to forge friendships with so many of our mission friends. I have said, time and time again, how we are a great family of faith, a family whose warmth and generosity of spirit never cease to amaze and humble me. In my time as Director of the Missions Office, I have travelled near and far, I have heard countless stories, and I have met people that have inspired me in so many different ways. The common denominator, the foundation that underlies everything, has been love. It is out of love that we care, that we reach out, that we do what we can to help those who need it. Your love and sacrifices, which I have seen demonstrated in countless ways, are a mighty force, a real and powerful entity, that has touched lives physically, emotionally, and spiritually, beyond all reckoning. This force has built churches, clinics, schools, and feeding centres. It has made children feel that they matter. It has touched hearts, given people hope, and kept people alive.

Your support has been a real gift to me, and as we navigate our new paths, I know that your kindness and generosity of spirit will extend to Fr John in my stead.

Sometimes, "thank you" just doesn't seem enough. Thank you for your prayers, for your friendship, for your kindness, for your generosity, and for your continued support of our missionaries as they carry out their great work across the world. As I prepare to take my leave, rest assured that you will remain in my heart and my prayers as Fr John and I work together to make sure that this new season will be a peaceful, prayerful, and positive one for all.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, now and always.
Fr Michael O'Connell MSC



A note from Fr John

Greetings to you all,

It is my privilege to write to you as I prepare to take the role of Director of the MSC Missions Office, a role that has been filled so commendably by Fr Michael.

I have had the honour of working closely with Fr Michael and the Missions Office team over many years, during my time serving as parish priest in the nearby Sacred Heart Church on the Western Road. I have also spent many years involved in retreat and parish mission work throughout Ireland, where I have had the honour of meeting with so many of our mission friends.

I am very much aware of and thankful for your sharing in our mission through your constant support of the Missions Office. An MSC brother from the Indian Province has said, "If it were not for the supporters of the Irish MSC, we simply could not continue." Your help really does reach the ends of the earth.

At the moment, Fr Michael is journeying with me, and thanks to his dedication, he leaves a rich legacy; our missionary work continues, however, and I have every confidence in your support for the future.

You are a marvellous community of mission friends and your generosity is a true reflection of the love of the Heart of Christ. I too, like Fr Michael, pray that this new season will be peaceful, prayerful, and positive for all.

Yours in the Sacred Heart,
Fr John Fitzgerald MSC

