

People of Hope Carrying on Our Mission in Difficult Times

The Province of West Africa (Con't)

Ghana

Head porters are found in most areas of the southern part of Ghana. They are mostly young girls who leave home in the northern region to earn money. They live on the streets, in crowded rooms, stores and anywhere they can lay their heads for the night, after carrying heavy loads all day. They are left to the mercy of those who employ them for meagre wages. At Christmas, the sisters and a small team of lay friends prepared and distributed packages of food (jollof rice) and water to the head porters in three areas of Kumasi where the porters usually gather looking for



Photos: Province of West Africa

work. They gave food to about 250 porters. One can only imagine their joy in receiving some food for the holidays.

Province of the United States and Canada

Javouhey House, Newport, RI

Sister Marie Cooper

We see our sisters in many parts of the world on the front lines, reaching out to those affected by COVID-19 in the medical field, in the distribution of food, and other means of support. But we are confined. What can we do, if we can't be "out there" to touch the hearts of those who need someone?

At first we thought, "We'll make masks for medical personnel." But a strong allergic reaction to the fabric cut that effort short. There were, and still are, other immediate needs that include food, food, and more food!—"Grab and go" meals for those living in shelters or on the street, and staple foods for families who suddenly find themselves with no income, delivery of food to shut-ins. We also know of families living in rural areas without safe drinking water and newly arrived asylum seekers at our southern border.

We focus on three local groups who provide food to shut-ins and others in need. So far, we

have provided thousands of meals through these programs. We were also drawn to two other projects. The first is the Navajo Nation in Arizona, which is suffering greatly from a high rate of COVID-19 infection and an above average mortality rate. Hundreds of families do not have safe drinking water. We have provided 20 families, who each share with three other families, highly effective water filters. The second is a program run by women religious in Texas, where our support provides basic needs for many newly arrived asylum seekers in transition to their new homes with relatives across the country.

How we would love to be volunteering, organizing, greeting, and meeting all these people! Instead, we work from home, behind the scenes as we also accompany them in prayer. May each person's heart be touched with genuine care, respect, and support.