

Diocese of Central Florida
Outreach Project 2017 – 2018 (Fall Assembly 2017 to Fall Assembly 2018)

Mali, West Africa is considered to be one of the poorest countries in the world. On the United Nations Human Development Index, Mali is ranked 179th out of 188 countries. The first basic need of all humans is water. A land-locked country with a very deep aquifer, Mali is greatly lacking in this basic resource for survival and good health for its people. When electricity came to all of today's developed countries, good health and long life followed. More than 65% of Mali is desert or semi desert and living conditions are far below the rural standards of the early 20th century in the US.

Following the call that St. Theresa heard, Brett and Sheri MacLean also took on the job of serving the poorest of the poor. Dr. Brett, a Pediatrician and his wife Sheri, a Nurse Practitioner along with their 4 young children live and work in the Bako region in Mali. The family speaks French, the official language of Mali as well as Bambara, the widely spoken dialect.

For more than 9 years the MacLeans have lived and worked in Mali helping provide medical care for mothers and children, teaching Malians the skills needed to become clinicians and helping fundraise for new wells and health centers. They also raise funds to provide reliable and crucial solar power for medical centers.

Brett's first post in Mali was as Director of Pediatrics at the Koutiala Hospital for Women and Children. The family was there from 2007 to the end of 2013 when they then returned to the States both for a furlough and to determine how best to continue to serve. They returned in 2014 with Global Partners in Hope to establish medical centers in the outlying region. Global Partners is a world-wide Christian based nonprofit organization bringing *hope* to international communities through partnerships between people who can help and people who need *hope*.

The work is challenging and rewarding. Dr. Brett treats people of all ages including premature babies. Sheri nurses mothers, children and the sick. They both train and teach young Malian men and women to do the work. Their goal is always to assist the Malian people to be able to take care of themselves.

Needless to say, creating medical centers and making them successful is very dependent upon water and electricity. Imagine trying to tend a baby in need of an incubator with no electricity, assessing the condition of a patient in the middle of the night with no electricity. Imagine tending to the needs and health of the population without water.

Without water, without electricity, without trained clinicians
one in 10 Malian women will die from complications from pregnancy and one in 5 children will die before the age of 5.

Monetary support can help Brett and Sheri continue this vital ministry bringing light, water, health and hope to some of the poorest people on earth.