

### Sr Queen's life-saving work in Nigeria

[www.missio.org.uk](http://www.missio.org.uk)

'One of the lessons that I have learned through being on the Missions is that you have to keep going because there is nobody there to help you when you're stuck.'

Yet that there is 'nobody' around to help is not strictly true. When 'nobody' is around, there is an amazingly supportive network ready to step in and offer their services, unsung heroes and heroines of whom the rest of the world hears nothing. Very often the greatest achievements are those of a willing heart and a pair of hands that are prepared to become soiled on behalf of others.

Take Sister Queen, for instance, a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa in Nigeria. A crippling 2-hour drive along a dry season road divides the health centre in Sabon Papiri from the nearest hospital. She is the only medically qualified member of staff and is either on duty or on call twenty-four hours of the day, seven days each week. She is officially 'only' a nurse and midwife, but unofficially, she is also the doctor, pharmacist, social worker and matron. There is no flying doctor service to help her in emergency situations and the transfer of patients along the dried-up river bed which forms the main road is unbearably painful for the patient, risky for the driver and unimaginably stressful for Sr Queen as she escorts her patient to hospital.

On a 'normal' day, Sr Queen cares for in-patients, the outpatient clinic, runs an Under-5 and an ante-natal clinic. Where possible, she directs those who can walk but who need more specialised medical attention, to make their own way to the hospital in Yelwa-Yauri. This has its own problems: the local 'ambulance' is a wheelbarrow or a bicycle. Also, having negotiated the horrendous road, the sick person still has to negotiate crossing the River Niger! Yet there is no alternative! The rest of the world might never know of Sr Queen or the wheelbarrow-pusher or their life-giving love and dedication, but God does and so does the patient and his or her family.

World Mission Sunday, the official annual outreach of the entire global Church towards its younger members in the developing countries, is crucial to nurturing the growth and maturation of faith in Jesus and his message of love. This practical solidarity in faith cuts across language, culture, gender and socioeconomic status in a cooperation that builds churches and nurtures faith.

Across the world and especially in the rapidly-expanding Church in Africa and Asia, these young churches, which often face extreme difficulties, urgently need YOUR support. That is why, through priests, religious and laity, World Mission Sunday helps support 194,855 schools, 5,246 hospitals, 17,530 dispensaries, 577 leprosy centres and 80,560 social and pastoral projects.

The APF is the ONLY Church organisation that supports ALL of the 1,075 Mission dioceses throughout the world to grow and develop, 'not in the white way, not in the black way, but in the way and time it is willed to be.'