

A Case Study in Global Solidarity: The St. Cloud-Homa Bay Partnership

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On October 27, 2007, the Mission Office of the Diocese of St. Cloud, located in central Minnesota, was the first diocesan mission office to receive the U.S. Catholic Mission Association's National Mission Award. Among the many impressive programs and activities of the Mission Office that the Association cited in bestowing the Award is the nationally recognized Global Solidarity Partnership (GSP) between the Dioceses of St. Cloud and Homa Bay, Kenya. With the help of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the diocesan partnership has been functioning since 1999. One of the unique characteristics of the partnership is the involvement of the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University (CSB/SJU), a Benedictine institution that is the only Catholic college in the diocese.ⁱ In this essay we will discuss the structure and activities of the partnership at the diocesan level, and then look specifically at the participation of CSB/SJU, one of the diocesan constituent groups in the partnership. We will also look at some of the factors that are important for a strong Global Solidarity Partnership. Our goal is not only to give an analytical account but to present findings that may be of use to those considering or already involved in such partnerships. While we make use of some documents in the writing of this essay, much of the information comes from participant observation by the authors, each of whom have been actively involved in the partnership for a number of years.ⁱⁱ

Mutuality: A Key Global Solidarity Principle

Global Solidarity in Catholic Social Teaching is discussed in depth elsewhere in this volume. In this section we will focus briefly on *mutuality*, a key principle for Global Solidarity Partnerships that underlies the structures and practices of the St. Cloud-Homa Bay partnership. The importance of mutuality, and the efforts to practice it, will be seen in the case study below.

In their report on their 2005 conference on Global Solidarity Partnerships, CRS (2005, p. 8) wrote:

[Mutuality] means that each partner affects the other. Mutuality can take the form of face-to-face interaction that includes caring, loving, co-operation, empathy, respect, and communication. It is most directly manifest through the sharing of gifts. This requires valuing the gifts each brings to the partnership.

The CRS report then goes on to make an important observation:

We have become accustomed to seeing the world through the divisions of rich and poor; the 'haves' and the 'have nots.' Mutuality is unthinkable as long as the world remains divided by labels and distinctions.... We must be able to recognize our strengths and places where we are wounded or lacking. We must also

recognize other forms of riches and the strengths of others around us.... Give +Take = Mutuality."

The view of the world as being composed of "haves" and "have nots," as the "gifted Global North" and the "needy Global South," can prevent the development of true mutuality and solidarity. According to Pakisa Tshmika and Tim Lind, this view

divides us in two and creates deep-rooted complexes of superiority and inferiority. It makes some of us feel that we don't need others at all, and it makes others of us feel that we can do nothing without the initiative of others. It causes some of us to think we have no gifts worthy of sharing. It gives great honor to certain gifts, such as material wealth and power and particular professions, while dishonoring and cheapening gifts such as hospitality, certain less lofty skills, and reliance on others (Tshmika and Lind, 2003, p. 20).

Mutuality includes the sharing of gifts -- spiritual, non-material and material -- and everyone has gifts that God has given them for the building up of the common good. Waterman's (1998, 236) distinction between reciprocity and complementarity can help us in our thinking about gift sharing. For Waterman, reciprocity entails exchanging identical goods that are desired, while complementarity refers to the exchange of different goods that are desired. In cases of North-South global solidarity, the reciprocal exchange of identical material goods may not be possible or even desirable, though the reciprocal exchange of non-material goods, such as stories of family life, is possible. However, it is quite likely that the complementary exchange of desired goods can be made. For example, many delegates who went to Homa Bay commented on how spiritually enriching were their experiences of the liturgy there. Thus we should not think about sharing of gifts in the narrow terms of the exchange of identical goods but rather in the broader terms of complementary exchange.

But mutuality not only involves sharing gifts, it also involves other ways of relating that we usually associate with friendship. Mutuality is marked by equality, empathy, trust and dialogue; making plans and decisions together; listening to and learning from each other; and challenging, comforting, bearing with and forgiving each other.

In the St. Cloud-Homa Bay partnership, we have found that much of what we have said above about mutuality applies not only to the relationships among the dioceses and CRS, but also *within* the dioceses. For example, the college partnership group tries to discern what gifts the college has that it can contribute to the broader diocese and vice versa. Similarly, the college and the diocese have their own cultures that need to be understood and respected by each other. The value of mutuality must guide all the relationships within the partnership.

Mutuality, Empowerment and Advocacy. Solidarity should lead to the empowerment and flourishing of those in the relationship, helping, through mutual support, to remove the obstacles to full, integral human development. Often advocacy will be a necessary part of empowerment as people work together to demand a fair share of society's resources and to change the unjust domestic and international arrangements and structures that constrain them. Advocacy done in solidarity entails working with the partner and joining voices together to make them stronger. In some cases, it may mean speaking for the other in a context where the other cannot speak -- being a voice for the voiceless. But advocacy

done in solidarity always emerges out of an equal, trusting relationship and through the consultation and dialogue of mutually concerned and respectful partners who pool their experiences and knowledge. The St. Cloud diocese has an advocacy sub-committee for legislative advocacy and other solidarity actions, but this is an area that needs further development in the diocesan partnership.

Advocacy not only entails working to change governmental policies and structures at the national and international levels; it also involves various types of activities in which we engage regularly, such as shopping, eating and using energy. The sale of Fair Trade products by the diocese and the college is one of the ways they engage in this form of advocacy.

Ensuring Mutuality. Drawing from the report on the CRS Global Solidarity Partnership Conference (2005), we note some key ways to ensure mutuality in diocesan partnerships:

- Recognize and value the gifts each partner brings to the partnership
- Develop a shared vision
- Mutually define roles and responsibilities
- Open dialogue; foster a respect for cultural differences; change behaviors and attitudes
- Open minds to learn....
- Develop programs & approaches that influence one or more components of solidarity – hearts, minds & lives – for all of the partnership’s constituents;
- Develop and support encounters that result in mutual transformation (CRS 2005, p. 9).

As will be seen below, the St. Cloud-Homa Bay partnership attempts to implement these ways to ensure mutuality in its structures and activities. However, this is not as easy as it might appear. Jeffry Odell Korgen has noted that in United States there seems to be “a widespread perception of low-income people across the globe as entirely lacking skills and gifts of their own, dependent on the charity of the wealthy nations and individuals just to survive” (Odell Korgen 2007, 3). Such a perception is one of the challenges to global solidarity and mutuality encountered in both dioceses and at CSB/SJU.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Diocesan Partnership

The 1997 statement by the U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Called to Global Solidarity: International Challenges for U.S. Parishes*, highlighted the importance of global solidarity for the church in the United States and provided context for the development of the St. Cloud-Homa Bay partnership.

In early 1999, diocesan Mission Office staff, guided by the leadership of Bishop John Kinney and in dialogue with CRS, contacted a newly established Diocese in Kenya, Homa Bay. Bishop Kinney had recently left the CRS national board, and was familiar with that region of Kenya. Catholic Relief Services had a strong presence in the Diocese of Homa Bay, and thus when approached the young bishop of the diocese, Linus Okok, was very willing to explore a partnership. The College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University was invited by the diocese to participate in the developing partnership very early on.

When it came to actually establishing the partnership, one could say that the two dioceses “made it up as they went along,” and in fact are still doing so, engaging in ongoing learning and evaluation. While the theory for a partnership was well established, just what this kind of partnership would look like concretely had very little precedent. There was little to draw on for a pattern; in fact most of what was available on partnering was decidedly unhelpful. Certainly there were many “sister diocese” and “sister parish” relationships, many existing for years throughout the United States. However in virtually every case these were established and continued to operate on a relationship of the “haves” and “have-nots,” not on a relationship of mutuality and solidarity.

These relationships were formed under a missiology that centered on the churches of Europe and other developed countries as the “sending churches” and those of Latin America, Africa and Asia as the “receiving churches.” Therefore a one-direction process was the norm; it is really a misnomer to call these partnerships. Clearly a new model of partnership needed to be promoted based on a genuine commitment to mutuality. To fully utilize the potential of solidarity, those involved need to be fully open to the change and growth that can take place through the interaction of everyone sharing their gifts and needs.

Therefore the first steps in creating the St. Cloud/Homa Bay partnership were taken very carefully. Our experience and the evidence of history indicated that once a relationship was cast on the one-direction, sending/receiving, have/have-not basis it was virtually impossible to bring it back to one of mutuality. Moreover previous partnerships tended to be bi-lateral relationships focusing on material needs. And particularly for Americans the overwhelming reaction to peoples of a simpler life condition has usually been to “fix it,” meaning of course to make them more like Americans. And for the recipients a similar mind-set exists: the Europeans and Americans have the stuff that we need, so let us put our hands out for it.

The partnership actually had a bit of a mis-step at the outset. Since CRS was working in development projects in Homa Bay it seemed logical at the time that St. Cloud might adopt one of these. And in truth CRS, at this early stage of fostering solidarity, was still thinking in terms of mentoring partnerships that were based on material programs. Thus St. Cloud became very active in promoting and supporting a metal grain storage project.

But very quickly both dioceses saw that true human development, integral development, involved much more than something like food security. Since the Diocese of Homa Bay had two main operational divisions, one being the development department and the other the pastoral department, we all began to ask how we could engage one another on all the other rich and vital aspects of our lived faith, the rest of what makes us “church.” This brought all three constituents -- CRS and the two dioceses -- back to square one.

We realized that we needed to do more in-depth reflection and dialogue about the notion of mutuality and the necessity of sharing gifts and responding to needs on all levels of our common human condition, spiritual and social as well as material. The results of this,

"go slow and hope to get it right" approach was the drafting of a Mission Statement, worked on and discussed for quite some time. After the two dioceses agreed on the Mission statement, they jointly wrote a lengthier Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that stated in concrete terms the scope, structure, actors, roles, activities, and expectations in the Partnership (see CRS 2005, 59-64).

To guide this partnering process, both dioceses, with active participation of CRS staff, established a Partnership Leadership Team for each diocese. The Team membership, which includes both of the Bishops, represents a variety of constituencies in each diocese. And each Team is served by a number of sub-committees that are responsible for facilitating the wide variety of contact points between the dioceses. For example, there are sub-committees on education; liturgy; communications; social concerns (advocacy); evangelization; delegation arrangements; and project oversight.

Another major component of the partnership that began soon after its establishment has been yearly, two-week visits by diocesan delegations. The Bishops of both dioceses have themselves made several visits, thus giving a strong affirmation to the importance of the partnership. The delegates are chosen to represent their respective faith communities with visits made each way on alternating years. However in 2007 it was decided that every third year there would not be any delegation trips and this off-year would be devoted to developing ongoing aspects of the partnership. The delegates meet with those in the host diocese who hold similar occupations and interests, visit civil and diocesan organizations and sites, and are sent out, typically two by two, to live in parishes and with families to experience all aspects of one another's lives. These are not service trips: the delegations go to "be with," not to "do for."

In both dioceses the delegates are prepared for their trips by attending orientation sessions. In these sessions the delegates learn about the host diocese and their culture; practical matters of travel; and the theological dimension of their trip, including the concept of global solidarity. Besides reviewing global solidarity in Catholic Social Teaching, the orientations in both dioceses have been using material from the book *Sharing Gifts in the Global Family of Faith: One Church's Experience*, by Pakisa Tshimika and Tim Lind, two Mennonites involved in mission. Affirming that God gave everyone gifts meant to be shared for the good of all, the book explores the obstacles to and opportunities for becoming a gift-sharing church. It is a hopeful and inspiring, yet practical book.

To date there have been eight delegations, usually comprised of about 12-18 members. These experiences have perhaps had the deepest impact on our partnership. The evaluations of the trips by both the Kenyan and American delegates have been consistently positive. There does not seem to be any substitute for the actual "come and see" experience to truly grasp the significance of our sisterhood and brotherhood and to develop empathy for one another.^{iv} Many delegates develop friendships, stay in touch, and meet with each other if they are able to visit again. Sometimes parishes will send along letters and simple gifts such as rosaries and wood carvings as a material sign of

solidarity with those they have met.

In each case the chosen delegate is asked to get support from their faith community so that they are being sent truly as a delegate and are not just representing themselves. This can involve parish informational meetings and fundraisers, contacts with various constituency groups (both within the parishes and within the broader community), involvement of parish organizations and so on. And prior to being chosen a delegate must make a commitment to an ongoing involvement in promoting the partnership through such means as giving talks and presentations on their trip. Some parishes set up exhibits in their church lobbies and schools using photos and information provided by the delegates and display cultural items brought from their host diocese or donated to the parish. Such items are valuable tangible signs of solidarity.

One value of the rather substantial financial investment involved in these exchanges has been a very wide spread sense of ownership of the partnership. These visits have provided direct contact and meaningful interchanges between these people and thousands of parishioners. In the post-trip evaluation process virtually all of the delegates refer to their experience as life changing. This of course is always good to hear. However it is difficult to measure the impact that they have had on the hundreds of people with whom they have literally walked, prayed and shared their stories for a couple of weeks. We can say that the widespread participation involved with these delegations, both as delegates and hosts to delegates, has made this partnership very well known throughout the diocese. Our Bishop also consistently uses opportunities such as Confirmation celebrations to draw attention to the global connections.

The Diocese of St. Cloud has a similar partnership with a diocese in Venezuela. In this case an older relationship, started in the 60's under the older model of St. Cloud as "sending" and the Diocese of Maracay as "receiving," was radically revamped to the interactive, mutuality model described above.

Currently one of the areas most actively being promoted is the creation of sister parishes and sister relationships among various institutions within these partnering Dioceses in order to deepen the connections even further into the grass roots level of everyday life. To assist in this process the Mission Office staff developed a document of best practices, drawing on a wide range of materials as well as its own experiences and those of others working on parish sistering (see Diocese of St. Cloud Mission Office). Currently there are two sister parishes and one secondary school relationships in the partnership, with a number of others pending.

The Sauk Center (St. Cloud)-Migori (Homa Bay) parish partnership illustrates the nature a complementary exchange in gifts. First the concept of mutuality was presented by the diocesan leadership to each parish prior to their making a partnership commitment, to assure that they buy into the notion of true solidarity. Then the parish partnership committees began to communicate via e-mail and to share written materials about their respective parish realities. Then a major step to cement the relationship was through

delegations from each faith community. These were very moving experiences which gave rise to a series of exchanges. Both communities now have specially prepared laminated prayer cards in their respective churches and at every liturgy the entire community prays for the needs of their global partner. In the Sauk Center Catholic school there is a revolving series of pictures of Migori children posted at ever drinking fountain with a reminder note “pray for our sisters & brothers in Migori”. In Migori church they have a clock given by Sauk Center set always at the CST in the US. A cable TV station collaborated (without charge!) to develop a half hour presentation of the partnership using footage from the Migori parish. To broaden the ownership, the delegates from Sauk Center had a 10 week series of inserts on the partnership in their Sunday Bulletin. Both sides have shared video presentations on local foods and food preparation. Two Sisters from Homa Bay made presentations to groups in Sauk Center such as Girl Scouts, Knights of Columbus etc. on cultural practices and values. Along the way they have adopted a MOU to spell out areas of collaboration. These parishes are now exploring a project to assist with the educational needs of the children of Migori. They are also moving into more substantive issues such as the HIV/AIDS problem so prevalent in western Kenya. As one response they will be participating together on a Child Survival Program in collaboration with the CRS people on the ground in Homa Bay.

But perhaps the most meaningful and significant outcomes of this partnership are the intangibles. We have noted that once the relationship has reached the stage where the members feel they are bonded and are accompanying one another, their very global outlook changes. Their preconceptions about one another give way to an appreciation of alternate perspectives on what is important in life; seeing through the eyes of the other brings about personal transformation that we are able to measure a bit through regular evaluations and partnership reports.

Another form of parish involvement in the partnership is the assignment of a priest from Homa Bay to a parish in the St. Cloud Diocese for a three year period (see CRS 2005, 65-66). The first assignment was in 2004; after a positive evaluation by all involved a priest from Homa Bay was assigned to a parish in St. Cloud again in 2007. And this posting is very publicly stated as a “missionary assignment”, meaning the priest is not coming to St. Cloud simply as personnel supply but rather to bring the African experience of life and the Church to the people of St. Cloud. This experiment in reverse mission has been very well received with both priest and people regularly commenting on the richness of this exchange.

The College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University and the Partnership

According to Melanie Morey and John Piderit, S.J. (2006, p. 371), “Conventional wisdom at Catholic colleges and universities supports keeping a respectful distance between the institutions and the local diocese.” However, our case study provides an example of the mutual benefits of collaboration between the college and the diocese. And

while *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul II, 1990) has created some tension between some dioceses and Catholic colleges and universities, the document's call for the collaboration of the latter in the peace and justice mission of the broader Church (see paras. 32, 34) has served to motivate and support the involvement of CSB/SJU in the partnership as a diocesan constituent group with its own unique gifts. Campus participation comes under the guidelines, global solidarity principles, and mission statement developed by the two dioceses with the help of CRS and its involvement with Homa Bay and is coordinated with and approved by the St. Cloud-Homa Bay Leadership Team, on which at least one CSB/SJU faculty member has served since the Team's establishment.

As noted earlier, CSB/SJU has been involved in the diocesan partnership from its beginning. This involvement came about because of the relationship that the diocese already had with the college. In the fall of 1999, the diocese contacted a campus minister about the developing partnership, who in turn contacted a faculty member she thought would be interested. The faculty member formed a partnership committee on campus to organize and coordinate collaboration with the diocese; he was soon appointed to the newly formed diocesan Leadership Team. He and two students recruited by the committee went on the first diocesan delegation to Homa Bay in March 2000. The positive experience that the three CSB/SJU delegates had in Homa Bay confirmed the value of the partnership in their minds and became the basis for organizing the further involvement of the schools. A broader campus partnership group was formed, consisting of interested students and faculty, with three faculty members serving as the leadership committee. A group listserv was established, which proved key to the development of the group and its activities.

The campus partnership committee's leadership team, in collaboration with the Department of Peace Studies, the diocesan Mission Office and CRS has organized on campus a conference and other educational events about Kenya; recruited students and faculty to participate in diocesan delegations to Homa Bay; and hosted delegates from Homa Bay and organized campus-speaking engagements for them. CSB/SJU students and/or faculty have participated in most of the diocesan delegations to Homa Bay. The faculty included what they learned in their courses, and the students made presentations on their trip in venues on and off campus. The academic value of the partnership made it especially interesting to some faculty and students. For the first seven years of the campus group's participation in the partnership, the administration of the college expressed support for such participation and helped to facilitate it in some valuable ways, seeing it as part of the mission of the college, but was not involved very visibly. Since the coordinator of the group was a professor in the Department of Peace Studies, it provided resources and assistance for most of the group's activities. Such support was another key factor for the partnership group's development and activities. ^v

While continuing to support campus involvement in the diocesan delegations, early in CSB/SJU's collaboration with the diocese the campus leadership committee saw the value of utilizing the college's gifts and developing a program that would be more academic in tone and that would include visits to various CRS project partners as well as to the people of the Diocese of Homa Bay. Student learning would take place in the

context of relationships established and nourished through the diocesan partnership. Such a program would not be the usual study-abroad program but would have a peace, development and human rights focus, and help students to discern if they have some form of vocation in, or in solidarity with, Kenya or the developing world. With the help of diocesan Mission Office and CRS-Kenya, the campus committee made contact with the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Nairobi – there are no Catholic colleges in the Homa Bay Diocese – in order to explore possible collaboration on educational opportunities such as May terms and student and faculty exchanges during fall semesters.

The discussions with CUEA and others led to a month-long Kenya May term in 2005, supported by the St. John's University Vocation Project with funding from the Lilly Endowment. After four required on-campus orientation sessions^{vi}, ten CSB/SJU students and one faculty member lived at CUEA, took a short course there on East Africa, visited projects of CRS' partners in Homa Bay and elsewhere, and visited people in the Diocese of Homa Bay for several days. Four CUEA students and a CUEA faculty member lived and traveled with the CSB/SJU students. As part of the vocation exploration component of the trip, the term ended with a daylong retreat with a local Benedictine and a Maryknoll lay missionary during which the students reflected on how everything they saw and experienced influenced their thinking about their own vocations. In the fall semester after their return, the students made a joint presentation on campus about the trip, and some made presentations in other venues such as classes, parishes and community organizations. All of the students gave the term a positive evaluation; two of the most valued components of the trip identified by the students were having personal contact with the people we visited, especially the Kenyan students, and having time to absorb what they were experiencing.

In May 2007, another, shorter (two week) study trip was organized, focused on the theme of "Peace, Development and Human Rights through the Lens of Catholic Social Teaching." The president of the College of St. Benedict expressed her strong support of the trip. The students attended six orientation sessions, one of which was led by a CRS volunteer who recently returned from West Africa, and who recently graduated from CSB/SJU. Three students took a two-credit independent study course in preparation for the trip. The College of St. Benedict's vocation project, Companions on the Journey, supported the trip with funds from the Lilly Endowment. Once again CRS partners in Homa Bay and elsewhere were visited, along with some Maryknoll projects, and people in the Diocese of Homa Bay. This time two CSB/SJU faculty members and a campus minister, who is also the diocesan director for CRS, accompanied nine students, including one student from Kenya. Four CUEA students accompanied the CSB/SJU students for two days. To help with the vocation exploration component of the trip, two Maryknoll lay missionaries, one of whom is a recent CSB/SJU graduate, also joined the students for several days of the trip, and the students met with a young CRS volunteer. Once again, two of the most valued components of the trip identified by the students in their evaluations were having personal contact, and having time to process their experiences.

After returning in June, some students made presentations on their trip experiences to some church groups. During the fall semester, the students made presentations on campus

and in other venues. Also, a fall course covered some of the issues in Kenya that were briefly examined there, and a follow-up independent study course was arranged for one of the students. A delegation from Homa Bay visited the diocese for six weeks in the fall of 2007, and came to campus for a day, during which some of the delegates made presentations on campus. The students had met some of the delegates during the May trip, and they and the delegates were very happy to see each other again. As a sign of hospitality and support for the partnership, the president of the College of St. Benedict hosted a lunch for the Bishop, the delegates, Mission Office staff, students who went on the May trip, and some college administrators. The president's very visible show of support for the college's involvement in the partnership sent a message to the broader campus community, the diocese, and the Kenyan delegates that the partnership was important to the college and not just to a group of students, faculty and staff.^{vii}

In keeping with global solidarity principles, both May trips did not emphasize service but rather emphasized learning about the lives of Kenyans, what they are doing to solve their problems and what we can do in solidarity with them, including such things as fair trade and legislative advocacy in the U.S. (see Ver Beek 2007; Pagnucco, 2006; 2000). One concrete outcome of the trips is an annual campus Fair Trade Craft Sale, which includes crafts provided through the CRS Fair Trade program, as well as clothing made by abused girls at the Cardinal Otunga Girls' Empowerment Center, a site visited during both trips. Deeply impressed by the complexity and magnitude of the challenges faced by Kenyans, as well as by the many good things and impressive efforts they saw, the students returned with a strong desire to find concrete actions that they could take in solidarity with the Kenyan people.

Factors Contributing to a Strong Global Solidarity Partnership

The St. Cloud-Homa Bay partnership has been in existence for eight years and generally is perceived as being successful and valuable by the participants and some outside observers. Drawing from our experience and the findings in a CRS report on GSPs (CRS, 2005), we have identified below what we see as some of the key factors for a strong partnership at the diocesan as well as the individual constituent group (e.g., school and parish) levels.

Commitment of the Institutional Leadership. The bishops and appropriate leaders should be involved in and committed to the partnership. This is important not only for symbolic reasons, but also for such important things as the authorization and support of activities and the commitment of resources and staff time. For the college, the support of the president was very important as well as the support of the Department of Peace Studies, which provided resources and staff time for partnership activities.

Statement of Mutually Defined Mission, Roles and Responsibilities. The diocesan partners should jointly compose a Mission Statement and Memorandum of Understanding. The statement encompasses all the constituent groups of the dioceses. However, diocesan constituent groups, such as parishes or schools, that are establishing partnerships should mutually develop their own more specific MoU for their relationship.

Broad Involvement. While the commitment of the leadership of the diocese is vital, the partnership needs to have the broad participation of members of the diocese, including such people as parish pastoral ministers, members of women's, men's and youth groups, businesspeople, farmers, teachers, and medical personnel. This is important not only because it helps the partnership to have a broad transformative impact in the dioceses and provides an opportunity for a variety of participants to share their gifts, but also because broad participation expands the sense of ownership, helping to assure the continuation of the partnership,

Leadership Team. Each diocese should have a leadership team responsible for the coordination of the diocese's participation in the partnership, and for communication within and between the dioceses. The exchange of information openly, effectively and efficiently is vital for a strong partnership. The diocesan leadership teams should have representatives of various constituencies in the diocese. Sub-committees can be formed for various tasks, such as delegation planning, media relations or education, or constituencies, such as women or youth ministry. The diocesan leadership team has been key for the successful functioning of the partnership; the college leadership team has been key for the college's involvement. Having faculty on the diocesan team has been very important for sharing information and planning and coordinating activities.

Frequent Exchanges of Delegations. This is perhaps the most important component of a strong partnership. Delegations should probably visit the partner diocese every other year or so. Through frequent well-planned visits that include reflection, delegates experience the lives, gifts and needs of their brothers and sisters in the partner diocese. Many delegates have described these visits as "life transforming." The delegations should include representatives of various diocesan constituencies who can meet with their counterparts and discuss similar experiences and interests. Each delegate should make a public presentation on their experiences once they return. While the college trips are largely comprised of students, and an academic component is included, the basic goal of the trips is the same as for the diocesan delegations: fostering solidarity. In that sense the trips differ somewhat from the conventional study abroad program and international service trip.^{viii}

Ongoing Learning and Evaluation. The partners must be "learning organizations," evaluating the partnership on an ongoing basis and open to learning from experience and to adapting to changing situations (see Kithikii 2003). The CRS Global Solidarity Program, with its expertise and accumulated experience, is a uniquely valuable resource to help with such ongoing learning and evaluation at all phases of the partnership.

Conclusion

In this essay we have examined a successful Global Solidarity Partnership involving Catholic Relief Services and the dioceses of St. Cloud and Homa Bay, and the participation of a diocesan constituent group, the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University. We have described the development, structure and activities of the

partnership, and highlighted the importance of mutuality. We concluded with a discussion of factors contributing to a strong partnership.

We have also identified some important continuing challenges for the partnership. Some people in both dioceses hold the have/have not's charity model and may be reluctant to accept the global solidarity model. And while the experiences that trip participants have are often life-changing by their own accounts, the best ways to follow-up such trips and to channel the participants' enthusiasm are not always clear and need continuing exploration and development. There are other challenges indicated in our case study. However, as members of learning organizations we know that there will be lessons to be learned from other GSPs, and we hope the research and information-sharing on them will continue.

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ⁱ The College of St. Benedict is a women's college with only women's residences on campus, and St. John's University is a men's college with only men's residences. The two schools are several miles apart. Each school has its own president. However the schools have a unique equal coordinate partnership, and share one academic program, with students attending classes together on both campuses and faculty teaching on both campuses, among other things. Because of the coordinate relationship the schools' have the combined name.

ⁱⁱ Fr. William Vos, who spent 19 years in East Africa as a Maryknoll missionary, helped to establish the partnership in 1999 and has been a leader in it since 1999; Ron Pagnucco became involved in the partnership in the Fall of 1999, and was appointed to the first diocesan Leadership Team, on which he served for two years. He and two CSB/SJU students were members of the first diocesan delegation to Homa Bay in March 2000. He also organized the campus partnership committee in the spring of 2000, and continues to serve as its coordinator. Agnes Kithikii has been working with the partnership as program officer of the CRS-Kenya GSP since the spring of 2005.

ⁱⁱⁱ For example, the have/have not's charity model appears to guide most campus activities concerning the developing world. One student preparing to study in South Africa wrote in the campus newspaper about how the have/have not's model guides service projects in the college's study abroad programs: "Before more groups of energetic students take on charitable endeavors...student participants.. should reflect on the real reason for volunteering..." She continued: "When we all realize that the improvement of any country depends on working together with local people and not on the activities of patronizing, idealistic, unaccountable and poorly informed outsiders, we can work together to achieve real, meaningful progress" (Edlund, 2007, 9). Some international students have also commented on the well-intentioned yet patronizing views some students seem to have of developing countries.

^{iv} How these structured exchanges relate to the criteria for positive intergroup contact as presented in the Contact Hypothesis is an area yet to be explored more fully. For an overview of research relating to the Contact Hypothesis, see Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000.

^v The fact that the group's coordinator (Ron Pagnucco) has an academic interest in Kenya and does research on transnational networks and social movements was also helpful in that he could devote time to the partnership for research and teaching purposes.

^{vi} In addition to reading materials on global solidarity, the students read sections of the Neal Sobania's introductory college text *Culture and Customs of Kenya* in preparation for the trip. The book is one of a series of country studies published by Greenwood Press.

^{vii} Since the college leaderships' support of the partnership was not very visible, Ron Pagnucco deliberately organized the lunch as a way of showing that support and celebrating the partnership. The president of St. John's University was unable to attend the lunch because of a scheduling conflict.

^{viii} At a workshop on study abroad and global solidarity, some participants suggested that such trips be called "solidarity" trips to differentiate them from study abroad programs and international service trips (see Pagnucco, 2006). The CSB campus ministry changed the name of its domestic and international trips

during spring break from “service trips” to “Alternative Break Experiences,” and while still in some cases including a service component, the primary focus is the learning and solidarity aspects of the experience.