



# Friends of IMCK

## 2019 Annual Report

This last year has been an exciting one for our project. There are highs to report and, unfortunately, there are some lows as well. Through it all we continue to soldier on, trusting that the Lord will use our meager efforts to enable the IMCK to continue to not only survive, but hopefully one day to thrive in its education and healing mission for His church in Congo.

Let's start with the good stuff! Our board has been reinforced. I am pleased to announce that we have been joined by Bob and Jan Irish from Oregon who have also served onsite at IMCK during an extended period of service there. Also joining our board are Dr. Henry Sperry Nelson and his daughter Anne Coughlin, who are the son and granddaughter of Dr. Henry Nelson, who served both in the Congo at IMCK and in China prior to that. These new board members have brought new energy, ideas and enthusiasm to our efforts. When you read this report, you will be visiting a new website that Bob Irish and Bill Rule have been laboring to get up and running.

Our board has been struggling to help the current financial situation at IMCK as we concurrently seek to add to our endowment fund. The complex that makes up IMCK is functioning in a recent war zone of an impoverished nation. It does much charity care under these circumstances and the economic milieu ensures that fees that can be collected are not enough to support the institution. We have joined on occasion with various other organizations and churches to help them pay salaries and inadequately funded retirement liabilities for the staff. Several of our members with business and computer experience and skills have been working with the folks there to seek solutions to, where possible, the repeated budget problems they have been having.

In October of 2019, the board gathered for a rare in-person meeting in conjunction with the Congo Mission Network's annual meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee. This meeting enabled us to meet with the Director of IMCK, Dr. Serge Makolo. We were delighted to be able to get to know this bright young man who bears such heavy responsibility with others in the leadership there.

Early in this calendar year with the market's early run-up, the corpus of our endowment fund had reached as high as \$761,061. We have elected to start making regular payouts to the IMCK of earnings from the endowment once it reaches one million dollars, and we were smelling the oats in the barn. This growth was and is fueled not only by the many gifts that faithful donors have given during the ten years of our existence, but through relatively steady accumulation of funds through growth of invested assets.

Which leads into the lows of my report that I alluded to above. In a nutshell, these are encompassed by one word: COVID-19. You are all too familiar with the economic and health dislocations this virus has wrecked on our country. Needless to say, our fund total is down relative to its peak. Now just imagine what problems this virus will doubtless cause as it slams into sub-Saharan Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular. The latter, one of the poorest countries in the world, is almost recovered from an Ebola outbreak in the East and is about to find out what a really contagious virus can do. Here, in the teeming cities and with only a handful of ventilators and limited other supplies in the entire country, Congo is facing a potentially fearful future. We ache for our friends and fellow Christians there.

A current drive is under way to augment the efforts of those on the ground in enabling a response to this crisis. We are soliciting donations to be sent directly to Congo for purchase of personal protective equipment there as well as provision for additional charity care. Twenty-five percent of the donations in this drive are to go to grow the endowment fund, seeking for sustainability, with the seventy-five percent remainder going directly to IMCK for discretionary use in dealing with the crisis. In doing this, we know we are again joining other organizations and churches who are participating in these sorts of efforts. Thanks to the presence of the hydro plant and its lake, electricity and running water is available on site. This is a huge advantage and is due to many years of donations from PC(USA), the Medical Benevolence Foundation and many churches, not to mention the work of engineers like our own Bob Irish and Dale Stanton-Hoyle.

As I write this, we have seen a significant recovery in the markets and a corresponding rebound in our investment for the endowment fund. We are prepared for continuing gyrations as America recovers from our own grim experience, but we have confidence that our long-term investments will eventually recover and continue to grow. Please consider joining us as we seek to make a long-term and continuing difference to this all-important institution. We need additional help on our board as well as continued participation by the wonderful donors who have glimpsed our vision.

Respectfully submitted,

Tinsley Gordon Smith, M. D.

President  
Friends of the IMCK