



Our History

1912

CMMB dates back over 100 years, to 1912 and the dream of Dr. Paluel Flagg, a young anesthesiology resident at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City.

His dream was born out of personal tragedy, from the death of his infant daughter and later in that same year, the death of his wife. In his grief, Dr. Flagg sought solace, and that solace lay in ministering to others.

One of his first mission trips was to Haiti and recognizing the tremendous need he recruited others to join him.



1928

Originally named the Catholic Medical Mission Committee, it had grown extensively, became incorporated as Catholic Medical Mission Board in New York City.

1931

CMMB's first executive director Father Edward F. Garesche, SJ, purchased two brownstones on the lower west side of Manhattan, serving as CMMBS headquarters and warehouse for donated medicines. This effort became a mainstay of CMMB's work, and the Medical Donations Program was underway.



The Venerable Fulton J. Sheen and Mother Teresa

1946

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen, served on CMMB's Board of Directors from 1946 to 1976, and his efforts in encouraging pharmaceutical companies to donate medicine to CMMB were pivotal to the growth of our Medical Donations Program.

1978

CMMB began providing \$5,000 worth of medicine each month to help Mother Teresa aid the 45,000 patients suffering from leprosy she and her Sisters cared for in the city of Calcutta alone. Mother Teresa was no stranger to CMMB.



2000

CMMB evolved into a “program-driven” organization, developing programs fight HIV/AIDS in South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland, Botswana, and Lesotho. CMMB made a five-year, \$5 million commitment to build the capacity of more than 140 community-based organizations focused on palliative care, orphan care and placement, and HIV/AIDS.

2012

CMMB's resources were called into action to respond to a calamitous natural disaster: the massive Haiti earthquake. Haiti was the country where CMMB had worked the longest—nearly 100 years. It occupies a very special place in the hearts of all CMMB employees.

2015

CMMB renewed its focus on improving the lives of women, children, and their communities while maintaining our excellent reputation in providing health services to the poor and marginalized for over 100 years.