



Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

July/August 2013

Volume 22 Number 4

MISSION MUST INCLUDE INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Sr. Ann Hayden, MM –
Maryknoll Affiliate Board Member

...dialogue is “not primarily an intellectual exchange” rather an exchange of life experiences that help us build a mutual mission of love and service...

In spite of growing globalization, differing human economic, political, social and religious perspectives continue to exist around the world. While we can communicate instantaneously, we still do not really understand one another any more deeply than before the onset of electronic, handheld devices, Twitter, and Facebook, which are available 24 hours a day on a WiFi cloud. We continue to be confronted with the age-old problems of intolerance, polarization, exploitation, and violence against basic human rights to decent food, water, employment, education, and peace.

In the wake of Vatican II and in the midst of the challenges of our present post-modern world, our commitment to God’s mission must include, as a part of our practice, serious and open-minded inter-religious dialogue if solutions to our human dysfunction are to be found.

What kind of dialogue do we need? Catholic theologian, Peter Pham, in a series of retreat talks given to Maryknoll Missioners in Thailand, says that dialogue is “not primarily an intellectual exchange,” rather an exchange of life experiences that help us build a mutual mission of love and service, based on five common human attitudes, as we come face to face with our diverse God experiences. Fr. Pham names them as: *humility, commitment, inter-connectedness,*

empathy, hospitality, and solidarity.

We are faced every day with uncertainty and opportunity. The reflection offered by Sr. Rebecca Macugay, MM, at the close of the “Mission into the Future” Symposium held at Maryknoll, NY, in September 2012* outlines “mission as journey, mission as conversation and mission as embracing mystery.” Sr. Rebecca’s words on mission state,

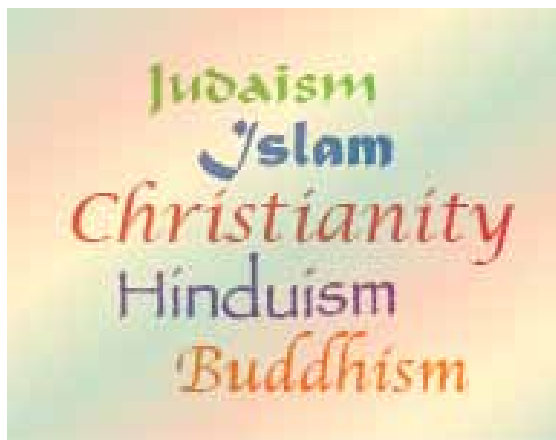
Mission is a conversation of life, not the abstract prescriptions for life to which we have been socialized by our social, cultural and religious systems. Dialogue enables us to dive deep into the core of our being. Gospel is a conversation of themes of life that sustain and transform it for the common good.

The questions she asks serve to call us to intentional reflection of our role in inter-religious dialogue.*

- How do we create an arena for discussion and exchange and prevent any particular belief system or ideology from colonizing that space?
- How do we make our mission endeavors respectful of diversity yet intentional in creating unity and harmony?
- How do we cultivate a willingness to suspend our habitual ways of knowing and seeing?
- How can we proclaim the Gospel as witness and presence rather than prescribed doctrine?
- How do we engage other faiths in the building of a “new heaven and earth”?

These are the challenges we face if we are to be integral participants in building a future of peace, justice and fullness of life as disciples of Jesus, members of the one human family, and partners in God’s ongoing creation of the heavens and the earth.

* For Sr. Rebecca Macugay’s full presentation, see www.maryknollsisters.org/centennial under Maryknoll Leadership Panel.



DIALOGUE & DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

This summer issue suggests we use Interreligious Dialogue to better understand and share our beliefs, while respecting those of others. Sr. Ann Hayden provides wise guidance in her front page article. In the “*Easy Meeting*” feature, John Meyer tells of an interfaith organization in Phoenix, AZ, which has built bridges of understanding, respect, and support among diverse people of faith. Please give us your feedback on this new feature, and send your ideas for an *Easy Meeting* to the NSFA.

In the last issue, Kathie Gribble prophetically reminded us that missionaries must always be learning new skills and adapting to the culture they serve. We are in a **digital** culture. Co-Editor Paula took up the challenge to more easily distribute the *Not So Far Afield*—and many of you saw the May/June NSFA at its new site: NotSoFarAfield.org.

But wait, there’s more!... a Maryknoll Affiliate Facebook page. Anyone can leave a comment at <https://www.facebook.com/maryknollaffiliates>. Feel free to “Like” it and leave a comment. I posted a question at our Facebook page and got a response within hours.

May we go forth boldly, reaching out to all faiths, forming partnerships, crossing even digital borders.



Not So Far Afield is a bimonthly publication of the Maryknoll Affiliates. The name is a play on the title of the original Maryknoll Magazine: *The Field Afar*.

Maryknoll Affiliates are a faith-filled people responding in community to God’s call to participate in Jesus’ mission. We express the Maryknoll Spirit in the context of Chapters which gather for prayer, reflection, and action. We challenge one another to go beyond borders, locally and globally, to walk with the poor and excluded, and to strive for peace and justice for all of God’s creation. We recognize that the Spirit who guides us on our journey moves without boundaries and that God’s unconditional love is present in all cultures and peoples.

Affiliates share in the mission and family spirit of Maryknoll Sisters, Fathers and Brothers, and Lay Missioners living lives of service in more than 30 countries.

If you would like further information or an opportunity to attend a local chapter meeting in your area, please contact the Executive Coordinator of the Maryknoll Affiliates at P.O. Box 311, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311 or call toll free 877-897-2386 or e-mail inquiry@maryknollaffiliates.org.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome three new Board Members. **Rich Lessard**, a member of the Albany Affiliate Chapter, is currently very active on the MAC2014 Planning Committee. A civil engineer by training, he has a great interest in work with the homeless, hospice community, and various musical groups. He also recently traveled to Guatemala and worked closely with members of the Guatemalan Affiliate Chapter, who were impressed with his respectful approach and cultural sensitivity. He is inspired by the emerging development of the third wave of mission and hopes to help the Affiliates to participate in this process. He is eager to serve the Affiliates in his new role on the Board.

Joe and Patty Symkowick, inspired by a Maryknoll Friends Across Borders trip to Kenya, are founding members of the Sacramento Chapter. Patty, a retired Catholic Elementary School teacher, previously served as a Parish Religious Education Director and as a Juvenile Hall Counselor. Joe, an attorney, recently retired from his position, Partnerships & Advocacy Officer, for Catholic Relief Services. Joe is also a deacon, and he and Patty have participated in the Maryknoll Deacon Partners Program for the past four years. They are deeply committed to the Maryknoll charism, very active in their Affiliate chapter, and have served as parish leaders in a multitude of venues. They are both eager to serve as new members of the Affiliate Board.



Co-editors: Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss & Paula Schaffner

Editorial Board: Lee Fermin

Kris Neufeld

Penny Robinson

David Stocker

We welcome submission of articles by Maryknoll Affiliates and Maryknoll Missioners as well as suggestions for articles. Articles are published in as timely a manner as possible and in conjunction with appropriate themes when applicable. All submissions are subject to editing.

Articles in *Not So Far Afield* do not represent the opinion of any of the Maryknoll entities.

Please send any letters to the editor, articles, photos or inquiries to the address below. You may also contact us if you no longer wish to receive Affiliate mailings, prefer to receive them by e-mail or read them on the web, or if you have changed your address.

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HOW LONG IS UP TO US

Jean Fallon, MM - CPT Member

Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) members Peggy and John Holm wrote a very revealing article for the January/February Issue of *Not So Far Afield*. They document recent experiences in Hebron very 'far afield' from anything we have known here in the US; a percussion grenade hitting a CPTer... *what is a percussion grenade?* Soldiers closing off the street, trapping merchants and passers-by...in a very, very narrow Old City street leaving nowhere to run... *calculated to cause panic*. Soldiers invading homes along the way...*more percussion grenades!* Peggy and John's story conveys the reality of Palestinian life under the increasingly violent Israeli military occupation.

In my seventh term as a CPT reservist in Hebron, the team members became increasingly worried; February was the anniversary of the Ibrahimi Mosque Massacre, and the Open Shuhada Street Action. We also joined the City of Hebron in a call to release Palestinian detainees on hunger strike. As we assembled in the town square, the sad news came: a youth had died in detention while being tortured. Then another death: a prisoner denied medical care had succumbed to cancer. Both people came from Hebron.

The Israeli military does not recognize non-violent demonstrations. When people march in non-violent protest, the military strategy now includes: closing off escape routes, launching percussion grenades, firing tear gas and rubber bullets into crowds, and drenching protesters with sewage waste water. They terrorize any who would demonstrate against the brutal occupation. We observed the soul-shaking signs of despair and the impatient disdain of Palestinian youth who reacted by throwing stones at IDF (Israeli Defence Force) soldiers during what were meant to be non-violent marches.

Every week, one of our team returns, exhausted and muddy, from the so-called 'Firing Zone 918', near Yatta, an area which the Israeli Army now uses for military maneuvers, having driven families off their own land. But the families, knowing that leaving their land means forfeiture of ownership rights, stay on in tents, enduring weather and nightly bombardments.

While all this was going on, in other parts of Palestine, people were experiencing escalating military actions, arrests, home demolitions, olive tree burning, land confiscations, and worst of all, the arrest of children as young as 8 years. From the *Weekly Report on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, we learned that during one week, 11 Palestinians were wounded, 59 more were arrested without warrants or any legal basis, and 350 olive and

almond trees were cut or burned by Israeli troops and settlers. Those "abducted," including children, are held in military prisons, and if they have a trial, it is in a military court with only military witnesses.

The March 20 arrest of 27 children outside an elementary school has drawn attention to the extreme vulnerability of children living in occupied West Bank. This was far from an isolated event. The alarming increase in systematic violence on children denies them access to education; to play; to free movement on their streets; and, most outrageously, denies their right to have a parent, guardian, or lawyer present when detained and interrogated. CPTs, International Solidarity Movement, and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Israel and Palestine have released a joint report documenting recent violence entitled *Occupied Childhoods*.



Photo courtesy of Jean Fallon, MM.

Our joint report calls upon state and non-state actors to safeguard the human rights of children and to bring pressure to compel the State of Israel to change its policy vis-à-vis Palestinian children. As the occupying power, Israel is responsible for abiding by international law and for protecting the specific rights of all children. It is essential that Palestinians respond to this violence as a nation. Israel's defiance of international law demands political and economic pressure from the international community.

On the 4th of April, Palestine's President, Mahmoud Abbas, made calls to all regional and international parties. He held the Israeli government responsible for the dangerous consequences of escalating Israeli military and settler violence on the security and stability of the region. Israel's Knesset is now the most pro-settler government in the history of Israel, and problems experienced daily by the Palestinian people have intensified.

When I returned from Palestine March 1, 2013, I was haunted by my experience in Hebron. The resilience of the Palestinian citizens masks the seriousness of what is happening. My enduring questions come from the anguish of Palestine's people... Why is Israel increasing violence? Where are our Christian churches? Where are media articles exposing the illegal and increasingly violent behavior of Israeli occupiers? Finally, where is the response from nations around our world?

I urge all people *become advocates* in their own local churches and to support our suffering sisters, brothers, and their children in Palestine; their Churches; and Palestine's emerging nationhood.



IMMERSION MISSION TRIP TO BOLIVIA

Mary Moritz – Northeast Florida Chapter

In March 2013, my husband, **John**, and I spent a week in a unique immersion mission trip, visiting my cousin, Maryknoll Father Frank (Pancho) Higdon, in Cochabamba, Bolivia. We arrived the day Pope

Photos courtesy of Mary Moritz



Father Frank (Pancho) Higdon, MM, with cousin Mary Moritz

Francis was elected; South Americans and Maryknoll Missioners were very excited about the new pope.

Pancho showed us the three missions where he serves. Volunteer teams help the local Indian children to understand and do their homework, while learning Spanish, keeping them from being lost. These children speak a native language, Aymara or Quechua, at home, but Spanish is used in the schools. Additionally, they feed the children a meal each day, as most do not have much to eat. Pancho also presides at Mass for the people of his barrio each Sunday and meets other needs as they arise.

Pancho showed us Cristo Rey, a parish which has its own clinic, that he started. Once it was up and running, Pancho turned it over to the local clergy.

We also enjoyed meeting some of the people in Cochabamba who are in formation to be Maryknoll Affiliates. Pancho, Sister Joy Esmenda, MM, and other Maryknoll Missioners have been helping them during their formation. We enjoyed talking with Pancho, Sister Joy, and Milan Portillo, one of the Affiliates in formation, about how well the current program is working for them.



Father Pancho talks with local cobbler.

We stayed at the Maryknoll Center, where a number of the priests and brothers live. Pancho stayed there with us for the week. Contrary to his usual accommodations at one of his missions, he could enjoy hot showers and have someone else cook for him. Generally, he prepares his own meals, using a pressure cooker.

We visited two other sites at the Maryknoll Center, the Language Institute and the Maryknoll Center for Mission in Latin America. We often saw poor people gathered outside the Center, washing their clothes in the stream there. One of the brothers, Larry Kenning, MM, is a former Minnesota farmer who ministers to the people in various ways, sometimes giving them food that he has grown in the Maryknoll garden.



John Moritz admires produce from Brother Larry Kenning's garden.

We went with Larry to a boarding school outside of town, where he helps with maintenance. There we met a Maryknoll seminarian, Shaun Crumb, who is serving in Cochabamba as preparation for his future priesthood. He is helping the children at the school with sacramental preparation.

We also spent time with Fr. Ken Moody, MM, who lives with the poor near the garbage dump. He showed us around his neighborhood and pointed out that many of the residents have built small homes on land they do not own. For some reason, even the land near the dump is very expensive and most residents can't afford to purchase it. Ken befriends his neighbors and says Mass for them each Sunday.

We also met Maryknoll Lay Missioners Jim and Karen Halberg Weaver. Jim is helping the local people to be better farmers. Their three children, Dan, Emma, and Jake, go to local schools. Both Jim and Karen are active with the schools their children attend.

John and I were inspired by the many and diverse ways the Maryknoll Missioners in Cochabamba served the people. The Missioners live very simply and put their energies into helping those most in need. All of the Missioners were open and welcoming to us. This was a wonderful way to spend part of our 2013 Lent.

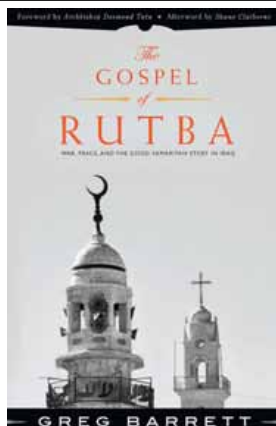


BE A BOOK REVIEWER!

This is your chance to share a book that helped you understand your mission or a mission area somewhere in the world! Tell us about it in 300-500 words!

If you don't have a favorite new book in mind to review, several Orbis books are still available free to reviewers. To review one of these books for NSFA, please contact the editors, Mary or Paula, at NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org.





**THE GOSPEL OF RUTBA
& "GRACE AMID RUINS"
IN YES! MAGAZINE, WINTER 2013**

Reviewed by Mary Ryan Hotchkiss – Portland Chpt.

The article, "Grace Amid Ruins," in *Yes! Magazine* quotes extensively from *The Gospel of Rutba*, Greg Barrett's exciting story of U.S. and Korean peacemakers. It tells how they had stayed in Baghdad through the first part of the 2003 U.S.-led "Shock and Awe" bombing campaign. Passing destroyed vehicles and villages in their dash to escape over Jordan's border, their taxi had a terrible accident and crashed into a ditch. They were ordered into a passing truck not knowing if they were being rescued, or taken hostage, or to be executed. They stopped at the small desert town Ar Rutba, 93 miles from Jordan.

Those who were Christian Peacemaker Team members gave the villagers what they call their "Magic Sheet." In English and Arabic the sheet conveys the message, "We are here to work for peace and to stand as brothers and sisters with Iraqis in this time of war." An exhausted doctor in Rutba's bombed out hospital asked, "Why, why is your government bombing us?" One of the peacemakers replied with tears in his eyes, "Sir, I wish I knew."

"You are safe in Rutba," Dr. Al-Dulaimi told them. "We will take care of you. We take care of everyone—Christian, Muslim, Iraqi, American. We are all human beings. We are all sisters and brothers."

Follow this link to *Yes! Magazine* for more of the story: www.yesmagazine.org/issues/what-would-nature-do/grace-amid-ruins.

I highly recommend both *Yes! Magazine* and *The Gospel of Rutba* by Greg Barrett, from Orbis Books. (Orbis Books gives a substantial discount to Affiliates.) We were introduced to *Yes! Magazine* at a Maryknoll Affiliate Conference by Affiliate Meff Ford. I recommend the quarterly magazine for its many peace- and justice-related articles.



MAC 2014 – TIME TO DO YOUR PART

The Albany Region Chapter is progressing with plans for MAC 2014 (June 19-22). With the Conference theme—"Maryknoll Affiliates: *The Third Wave Emerging into the Future*"—in place, and Fr. John Sivalon, MM, engaged to deliver the keynote address, we are now selecting a conference logo from various submissions, assembling a panel of speakers who will respond to the keynote address, and continuing to work on finances, the liturgies (in conjunction with the Affiliates in Guatemala), and many other aspects of the four-day conference.

With a major goal of making Affiliates aware of the various activities and projects in which our chapters are involved, we are planning a visual presentation that will highlight the chapters and their activities/projects. We will include materials from as many chapters as possible and have already sent a memo about this project to the Affiliate Chapters through the Regional Coordinators, asking the Chapters to submit materials. **Please, chapters, send one or more of the following:**

1. A digital/print photo of your group showing your chapter's name and location
2. Video clips/visuals of activities or projects in which your chapter is or has been involved
3. Digital/print still photos of activities or projects in which your chapter is or has been involved
4. A written essay/description of activities in which your chapter is currently or has been involved.



In all cases, please clearly identify the activity/project, the geographical location, and the names of the people in the photos or videos.

Since the actual visual presentation will take a great deal of time to prepare, materials **must be submitted no later than September 30, 2013**; of course, earlier contributions would be greatly appreciated. Chapters could also notify us as soon as possible if they do intend to send materials by September 30. Materials, and any questions about the visual presentation, should be forwarded to William Hall at wchone@hotmail.com or by mail:

William Hall
Maryknoll Affiliates—Albany Chapter
PO Box 4580
Clifton Park, NY 12065-0854

Check future issues of *Not So far Afield* for further updates on MAC 2014.



Part of our ongoing series of offerings for use in Affiliate Chapter meetings, this Easy Meeting is on this issue's theme.

**EASY MEETING:
AFFILIATES AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

John A. Meyer – Phoenix Chapter,
Affiliate Board member, and Deacon

Preparation:

1. **Read** through these two pages.
2. **Plan** who will read the passages and lead discussions of the questions.

MEETING PLAN

Opening Prayer:

*God help me cross human-made borders
to stand with all your sons and daughters
who live on the edge.*

*May everything I say and do help them realize
how much you love, forgive,
and care for them.*

—Fr. Joseph Veneroso, MM,
p. 31, Maryknoll Book of Prayer

*Religions found everywhere strive in different ways to answer the restless searching of the human heart by proposing 'ways' which consist of teachings, rules of life, and sacred ceremonies. The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in other religions and regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and life, those precepts and teachings, which, though differing in many aspects from the ones the Church holds, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all. **The Church exhorts her members to prudently and lovingly dialogue and collaborate with the followers of other religions...***

Pope Paul VI, "Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" also known as *Nostra Aetate*.

Introduction:

Let each attendee silently consider these initial questions:

1. What encounters have you had with people of other faiths?
2. How do you witness to your Catholic Christian faith?

Reading:

I was fortunate to help found the Arizona InterFaith Movement (AIFM) in 1995 and to serve on its board for over 10 years. Our guiding principle was living the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you". This principle is found in all the major religions of the world although the words may not be the same. For example, in Buddhism: "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." (Udana-Varga 5:18)

Our Mission Statement is, "to build bridges of understanding, respect and support among diverse people of faith through education, dialogue, service and implementation of the Golden Rule."



The Arizona Interfaith Movement has built bridges of understanding, respect, and support among diverse people of faith through education, dialogue, service, and the implementation of the Golden Rule by holding a variety of events:

- Golden Rule Banquet: Where people who are living out the Golden Rule are honored
- Voices of Faith Concert: An InterFaith evening of music, song and chants
- Experience InterFaith: A dialogue with members of other faiths
- Monthly forums to discuss the key ingredients of each faith and critical life issues our world confronts
- Interfaith prayer and support at churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, and other locations

where violent crimes have been committed because of one's faith belief.

- Educational forums and outreach programs to increase understanding, respect, and support among diverse people of faith.
- Opportunities to visit places of worship of a variety of faith groups throughout the community and to promote thoughtful discussion about the roles of religion in a multi-faith globalized society.

For me, it has affirmed even more my own Roman Catholic Christian faith, while witnessing, and because of, the faith encounters and inter-religious dialogues with members of other world religions through the AIFM. We may call God/Ultimate Reality by a variety of names, but in doing so we realize that we are limited by any name or concept.

Some principal points of agreement coming from representatives of the world religions are set forth in an article by Father Thomas Keating, OSCO, entitled "An Experience of Interreligious Dialogue," at contemplative-leadership.com:

- God/Ultimate Reality cannot be limited by any name or concept.
- Faith is opening, accepting, and responding to God/Ultimate Reality. Faith in this sense precedes every belief system.
- The potential for human wholeness—or in other frames of reference, enlightenment, salvation, transformation, blessedness, nirvana—is present in every human people.
- God/Ultimate Reality may be experienced not only through religious practices but also through nature, art, human relationships, and service to others.
- As long as the human condition is experienced as separate from Ultimate Reality, it is subject to ignorance and illusion, weakness and suffering.
- Disciplined practice is essential to the spiritual life; yet spiritual attainment is not the result of one's own efforts, but the result of the experience of oneness with Ultimate Reality.
- Some examples of disciplined practice common to the world religions are: practice of compassion, service to others, practicing moral precepts and virtues, training in meditation techniques and regularity of practice, attention to diet and

exercise, fasting and abstinence, the use of music and chanting and sacred symbols, practice in awareness (recollection, mindfulness) and living in the present moment, pilgrimage, and study of scriptural texts and scriptures.

The "Maryknoll Movement" provides a rich history that continues to the present moment of respectful encounters, dialogues, and service to and with people of other faiths, throughout the world. I hope that our Maryknoll Affiliate Chapters will reflect individually and collectively on the theme of Interreligious Dialogue and Affairs. May the Spirit of God guide you in this!

Discussion Questions:

1. In reading this article what new insights or ideas came to you?
2. What individual actions are calling to you?
3. What actions might your chapter undertake in the future?

Interfaith Closing Prayer:

Gracious Creator of the Universe,
 bless us with wisdom and courage
 to respect our diverse religious beliefs
 and practices and to have honest and
 authentic dialogue and collaboration
 with one another.

Resources:

The Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the USCCB: www.usccb.org

Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue: www.vatican.va

Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (CADEIO): www.cadeio.org

Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns: www.maryknollogc.org



Please share the topics and resources that led to an especially effective meeting for your chapter. We could feature them in future issues. Send to nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org.

Kirstin and Merwyn De Mello are Conflict Transformation practitioners with Masters' degrees in Conflict Transformation from the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia (www.emu.edu/cjp). Kirstin's experience is in designing and facilitating trainings in conflict transformation and developing restorative justice practices in schools. Merwyn is a former Maryknoll Lay Missioner with experience in developing peacebuilding frameworks at the local, national, and regional levels and designing peacebuilding curriculum for communities and academic institutions. From 2006 to 2009, Kirstin and Merwyn lived and worked in Zimbabwe as members of the Maryknoll Collaborative Community and were both involved with building peace. Currently they live in Chicago where they engage with communities to end violence and build a more just and sustainable peace.

OUR EXPERIENCE IN JEREMIE, HAITI

Kirstin & Merwyn De Mello – Chicago Central Chpt.

"I grew up in a family where dialogue almost does not exist. But these methods help me to progressively resist that way!"

These words from a student in our three-week, intensive conflict transformation course reflect the importance of this learning opportunity. Chicago Affiliate **Renate Schneider** invited us to come to University of the Nouvelle Grand' Anse (UNOGA) to teach 49 first-year students in February, 2013.

Renate is Vice Rector of UNOGA and founder

and coordinator of Haitian Connection (www.haitianconnection.org). The university is in its third year, the university brings much-needed post-secondary education to the rural setting of Jeremie. Students study agronomy and business management at this small university nestled between lush, green hills and a gentle, flowing river. Professors from Haiti, Latin America, the United States, and India volunteer their time to teach in three-week stints.

Through an interactive and participatory methodology, we engaged students, moving beyond language and cultural limitations. First we asked the students to share experiences of conflict in their daily lives. Their presentations, a rich foundation for the rest of the course, gave us a glimpse into the socio-economic and political reality of life in Haiti. Students shared about troubling and painful conflicts with siblings and other family members over money, land, or religious differences, between public and private high school students, in churches and organizations, as well as between political parties. Both students and teachers were struck by the universality of conflict—we are not alone in our experience of conflicts.

The discovery and learning took off as students engaged with enthusiasm and creativity, participating in small and large group discussions, making presentations, acting out skits, and practicing new skills in role plays. We also drew from examples in our own lives to show how conflict can be understood more clearly and where transformation is possible.

In morning reflections and end-of-day evaluations, students developed their reflective capacity, tapping into inner resources and also developing a critical disposition. Three reflective papers on a personal conflict deepened their understanding of the conflict as



Kirstin and Merwyn with their 49 students.

they delved into the applying their skills and learning in their personal lives and in their communities.

Our Creole-English interpreter helped bridge the language barrier. Language limitations compelled us to focus, slowed the pace, and made for many funny moments. The students, gracefully patient, quickly picked up on language nuances and our own quirks!

We also made time for walks into the town square, engaging in friendly conversations with those who would walk up to us as we sat on a bench and committing a few language faux pas! Each Sunday we climbed 20 minutes up the hill to 7AM Mass at a little church where an Italian priest offered a Creole Mass for about 50 worshippers. Another highlight was visiting the nearby Missionaries of Charity Sisters' home where the Sisters and their helpers provide a caring, secure environment for children who have been deserted by their families or whose mothers are too ill to care for them. We helped with the feeding of the babies and toddlers, some ill with tuberculosis or AIDS. With a sweet sadness we cuddled these young ones.

The timing of the course coincided with the pre-Lenten Carnival—a sight to behold! Street bands and dancers paraded through the streets, musicians playing instruments fashioned out of various homemade implements: drums made from buckets and trumpets shaped out of tin cones. Costumes prominently featured Diablo, the devil, provoking humor and wariness from spectators. Numerous motorbikes zooming in and out added chaos to the dancing, singing, and reveling. A festive sense and some aggressiveness added up to unpredictability. We stayed on our toes and out of the way of the motorbikes!

The sights and sounds of Jeremie are etched on our memory. At dawn, roosters crowed and church bells tolled in the distance. Our walks took us up and down hills past panoramic views of the ocean, and, as dusk beckoned, hearty, melodious greetings of 'Bonsoir' brought smiles and playful gestures from the children.

We left Jeremie with our hearts filled with gratitude—for Spirit of Hope's generosity (www.spiritofhopehaiti.org) in funding our trip, for all that the students taught us, and for this opportunity to walk alongside Haitians for a short time. One of our students, Marie Clennecy, dedicated a gospel song to us at the end of class: "Above All, We give Thanks to God..." That is our sentiment; we carry with us the hopes, prayers, struggles, and warmth of those we have shared our lives with during our time in Jeremie. And we give thanks.



EVENTS ARE GREAT GATHERING PLACES

Kathee Bautista – Greater LA Chapter

Since 1968, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has sponsored a Religious Education Congress which is currently the largest event of its kind in the world. Over a three-day weekend, notable theologians, teachers, authors, and musicians from all over the U.S. provide over 300 workshops and seminars, plus a keynote address. A highlight is liturgies offered in various languages representing the rich and diverse cultures of Southern California. Maryknoll Affiliates from several chapters in the Western U.S. regularly attend the Congress.


Over the past several years, the members of the Greater Los Angeles Chapter have organized an informal social gathering on the Saturday of the Congress to build community within the Affiliate movement. We find one another by checking in at the Maryknoll booth in the Exhibit Hall. We enjoy seeing each other, sharing a meal, and catching up on Affiliate activities.



Photo courtesy of Kathee Bautista

LA Gathering organizers Tim Moffet, Veronica Holland, and Kathee Bautista.

We invite you to plan ahead and join us for this very enriching weekend. The next Religious Education Congress will be March 14-16, 2014, with Youth Day on March 13. The Congress is held at the Anaheim Convention Center near Disneyland in Anaheim, California. For more information and to register, go to www.recongress.org.

Perhaps you have a popular event in your region where members from various chapters can meet. Please contact the editors so that they can include this news in *Not so Far Afield* or on the Affiliate Website. 

The **September/October** issue of *Not So Far Afield* has the theme of **Celebration of Faith**. Also, please tell us how you have been involved with **JustFaith**.

Please send your articles and chapter news by early August to nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org.

URANIUM MINING AND CARE FOR CREATION

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss – Portland Chapter
and Sr. Rose Marie Cecchini, MM

Most people are aware of the problems with nuclear weapons and nuclear power, but a visit to Gallup, New Mexico, emphasized for us the specific danger of contamination from uranium mining. At the 2012 Las Vegas Maryknoll Affiliate Conference, Sr. Rose Marie Cecchini, MM, described how Native Americans around Gallup, New Mexico, suffered from the intensive uranium mining in the region adjacent to and in the Navajo Nation lands. *The Forgotten Bomb*, a 2010 documentary, outlines the consequences of America's development and use of nuclear bombs.

In New Mexico this winter, Sr. Rose Marie led us to a site outside of Gallup, past massive red sandstone



Photo by Mary Ryan Hotchkiss

cliffs and the beautiful Church Rock. We saw an old industrial building with the faded letters, UNC, standing for United Nuclear Corporation, and then a sign on a barbed wire fence

warning: **No Trespassing - Authorized Personnel Only.** We had arrived at the Super Fund remediation site for the 1979 Church Rock uranium spill, which occurred only 14 weeks after the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident, but I had never heard of the Church Rock spill.

On July 16, 1979, a dam retaining an immense pond of tailings from the uranium extraction process failed, sending 90 million gallons of highly acidic radioactive water and 1,100 tons of deadly contaminated solid wastes down the usually dry Rio Puerco, through Gallup. According to a congressional report and as detailed in *Killing Our Own*, “**Except for the (nuclear) bomb tests, Church Rock (is) ...the biggest single release of radioactive poisons on American soil.**” This well researched book notes concerns that had been raised before the poorly constructed dam broke, including warning cracks unheeded by authorities.

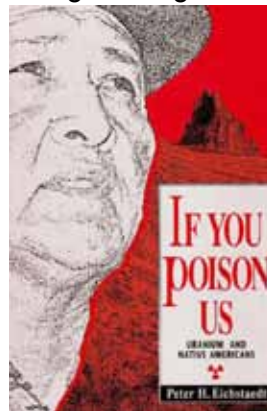
On the day before viewing Church Rock, we had seen the Rio Puerco dry wash far down river, meandering through the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona, filled only with tendrils of pink runoff from the last rain storm. Visualizing the contaminated tailings flooding down the Rio Puerco, I wondered, did the radioactive

waste travel that far in 1979? Did it reach the national park with subsequent rainstorms?

Sr. Rose Marie told us that General Electric Corporation is now responsible for monitoring the Super Fund site. GE bought UNC after it went bankrupt following the spill and took many years to begin the remediation. Adjacent hillsides were denuded of their contaminated topsoil. Much of the residue from the containment pond was formed into a massive hill and covered with more soil. Now 34 years after the spill, we could see signs of recent remediation activities at the roadside.

Sr. Rose Marie shared the concern that although much of the contamination at the Church Rock site appears to be contained, the remediation site has no seal on the bottom as is mandated by law. Surface and ground water carry contamination to the aquifer below. The local people, dependent upon the aquifer for agricultural and human use, have suffered economic and health consequences for decades, with toxin levels reaching 7,000 times health standards. In 2012, the New York Times and Huffington Post reported that while controversy still surrounds issues of contamination and accountability, pressure continues to ease regulation of open new uranium mining facilities.

Contamination of the earth and groundwater resulting from the extraction and concentration of uranium for nuclear weapons manufacture or nuclear power endangers the people and animals living in the area. The book, *Killing Our Own*, notes that the Church Rock disaster is only one of 15 similar occurrences, and, as Congressman Morris Udall stated, “Church Rock fits a pattern of sloppy and haphazard handling of mine tailings throughout the nation.”



Continuing to mine and refine uranium, producing more and more energy through nuclear power plants, and enabling our government's relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons greatly increase the likelihood of another disaster like the Church Rock spill. **As stewards of the earth we must take a different approach.**

May 2013 update: Roca Honda Resources (RHR) is proposing a new uranium mine in the Cibola National Forest on nearby Mt. Taylor in an arid part of New Mexico. It would be one of the largest proposed uranium mines in the United States in over 30 years, with an annual uranium production of 2.6 million pounds a year. Massive amounts of groundwater would be used in the process.




MARYKNOLL PARTNERSHIP

Bob Short – Executive Coordinator

“...we just came from a Maryknoll Gathering wherein all the expressions were invited to present on partnership.”

On May 22nd, Ann Carr and I gave a brief presentation to over 200 hundred Maryknoll Society members at their special Return Gathering in White Plains, NY. We spoke on how Affiliates have partnered with Maryknoll in the past and how we project to do so in the years ahead. Maryknoll Sisters, Lay Missioners, Society Alumni, and employees also spoke about their experience of partnership that evening. I think it’s safe to say that neither this topic nor this gathering would have taken place, or even have been imagined, as recently as five years ago. It was and is very encouraging. Still, Maryknoll has miles more to travel on its journey towards a more integral partnership for all.

We are becoming globally, even cosmically aware that relationship, rather than separation or functional application, is the fundamental life principle. It cuts across all segments in our world and universe. As creation moves towards integration and inclusion, exclusionary practice will never get us to where we’d like to go. “Good fences make good neighbors,” Frost told us. Civility is preserved, but at the cost of community not having the chance for fuller realization. Robert Bellah’s words from Habits of the Heart come to mind here: “Where history and hope are forgotten and community is the gathering of the similar, communities degenerate into lifestyle enclaves...”

For 100 years and counting, Maryknoll has very much stayed connected with its history and 

NEWS FROM THE KNOLL

**MISSION EDUCATION TRAINING SESSION
MARYKNOLL MISSION HOUSE—SEATTLE, WA
OCT. 25-27, 2013**

Contact: Kevin Foy, Mission Promoter/Coord.
Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers Western Region
kfoy@maryknoll.org Ph. 206-322-8831

MARYKNOLL MISSION INSTITUTE PROGRAMS:

Life: A Journey with God – Michael Morwood, MA :

Sept. 25-28 Los Altos, CA
Sept. 29-Oct. 4 Monrovia, CA

Application forms and program descriptions may be found at www.maryknollsisters.org.

hope, walking with and speaking out for peoples of diverse cultures, races, religions, ages, political persuasions, and economic backgrounds. It has been incredibly enriching and, in large part, has made the Maryknoll family what it is today. Now it’s time to look internally at how all the expressions within Maryknoll relate to and partner with one another.

There are wonderful possibilities ahead of us. While it was once feared that the vocational identities of some might be threatened if a stronger partnership were realized, experience has proven just the opposite. There is a deeper respect and mutual caring for all vocational expressions in the context of a family. It would be a terrible diminishment to degenerate into lifestyle enclaves. Sister Janice McLaughlin’s words at the Centennial Symposium have been repeated by many among us, many times: “If we don’t collaborate, we will die.”

On practical levels, presently there are redundancies, inefficiencies, and unnecessary expenses in many areas. There are some canonical issues to consider as well. Nevertheless, we can recall that we just came from a Maryknoll Gathering wherein all the expressions were invited to present on partnership. More and louder voices from within are heard speaking of the Maryknoll movement and the Maryknoll family. We know too that most outside of Maryknoll think of us as a single, diverse family.

In the years ahead, we’ll have short windows of opportunity to make decisions that will be challenging and often not fully certain. Thankfully, in God’s Mission and Postmodern Culture, Father John Sivalon, MM, helped us to see how uncertainty is actually a gift. Maryknoll has always moved towards uncertainty and gone where few would choose to go. James Anthony Walsh challenged Maryknoll to be bigger than itself. The Affiliates look forward to joining all in Maryknoll to go beyond ourselves.



PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR:



Sr. Jeanne Schaedler, MM, who died on May 16, 2013 had been a Maryknoll Sister for 58 years. She served for 38 years in South Korea, and most recently in pastoral ministry in Maryknoll Sisters Residential Care in Ossining, NY.

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