



Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

January/February 2019

Volume 28 Number 1

BORDER CROSSING

Evelyn Brush – Portland Chapter

A presentation on human trafficking I attended was both informative and disturbing. Thankfully, the presenters included a list of actions and opportunities if we wanted to be more involved. One opportunity was at Rahab's Sisters.

Rahab's Sisters, a safe space for women to gather each Friday night, offers dinner, time off the street or away from 'boyfriends,' and needed supplies: socks, underwear, and hygiene items. It operates out of Sts. Peter and Paul Episcopal Church in Portland, Oregon. Volunteers serve the female guests (and those who self-identify as female), most of whom are unhoused and over 45 years old. Some are prostitutes; many are addicts, and many are women of color.

Rahab's Sisters emphasizes *Radical Hospitality*. Their vision is a city where all women are safe from physical and sexual exploitation. They offer a warm, safe environment with nutritious food, hot coffee, and conversation. From 7-10 in the evening, it is a place for women helping women, whatever the guest's condition. Actively using drugs is discouraged, but "Our sisters are welcomed without judgment, no strings attached." (<https://rahabs-sisters.org>)

Even though I work full time in parish ministry, I am mindful that I still need to do service for which I am not paid, so I applied to volunteer one evening a month. The 5:30 orientation included a tour of the gathering space, discussion of services provided, and what to expect once the doors opened. At 6:30, we gathered in the kitchen so that the volunteers could meet each other, review the schedule for the evening and know what was offered for dinner. At 7pm, the uniformed security guard was positioned at the front door (to keep the men out), and the doors were opened to welcome the guests. I had a chance to wait tables, work the drink station, monitor bathroom usage, and to gather supplies for women. I ate dinner there and engaged in conversation with a couple of women and one dog.


Midway through the evening, the director took the new volunteers out to the parking lot so we could observe the needle exchange program. Multnomah



County Health Department staff were busy showing addicts how to use Narcan (for overdose recovery), counseling folks about rehab options, and exchanging needles. It is a program that I had heard about but had never seen in action.

After three hours at Rahab Sisters, the new volunteers were released to go home and reflect on the experience and to discern about making a six-month commitment. I had so much to process that I couldn't sleep until late into the night. The next few days I was lost in thought as I tried to process my experience. I had been truly out of my element. It is one thing to know about transgender people as a concept, or an item in the news, and another thing to greet one as a sister. I wasn't prepared to see older Asian women who were homeless or the very skinny women who turned tricks on 82nd Street. It really showed me how disconnected I am from the lives of these women.

This experience of Radical Hospitality has changed me. I have had to acknowledge my discomfort and to recognize my limitations. It has been humbling to know that I am not invincible. Finally, after two weeks of prayer and discernment, I have accepted that I cannot make the requested six-month commitment.

Please keep those involved with Rahab's Sisters in your prayers. The space they offer marginalized women is a vital service. It is a small port in a wild storm where women can hang out and be safe. 



CHANGING YEAR

The new year beckons. Are we open to change? Will our actions and words change us, or others?

On our cover, Evelyn Brush experiences Radical Hospitality and says she is forever changed. Seattle Affiliates learn that racism cripples all of us, but that the words and actions of the transformational values of abundance, transparency and collaboration could change unjust systems.

Pope Francis' new peace prayer urges communication with new words and actions as the way to peace. Our executive coordinator, Bob Short offers the possibility of a deeper knowing with *wordless* contemplation, as does a new virtual chapter.

In transformational *action*, ten Affiliates came together in Texas, prayed, reflected, and then transformed a house damaged by hurricane Harvey. Email the Kleemans, brklee@att.net, if you're interested in repairing more houses, possibly the first week of April 2019.

The NSFA invites your plans, words and actions: NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org.



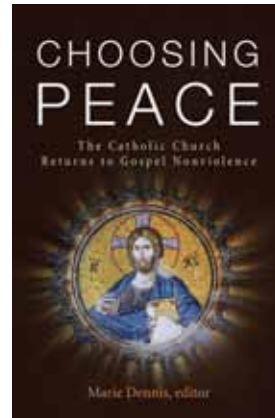
Not So Far Afield is a bimonthly publication of the Maryknoll Affiliates. The name is a play on the title of the original Maryknoll Magazine: *The Field Afar*.

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 around the world. 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 e-mail him at rshort@maryknollaffiliates.org.

AFFILIATE BOOK GROUP

The Affiliate Book Group resumes April 2019! Come join us. We suggest reading and discussing ~



Choosing Peace
edited by Marie Dennis

(<https://www.orbisbooks.com/choosing-peace.html>)

Email Bob at affiliatebshort@gmail.com with your best day and time for a weekly telephone conversation, and any additional books or authors you'd like us to consider.

TAKE A STARRING ROLE!

How do you participate in your chapter?

Some possibilities:

- Prepare meeting sections, i.e., Spirituality.
- Invite new members.
- Lead a book/article discussion.
- Take notes and write a meeting report.
- Suggest possible new actions.
- Organize a potluck meal.
- Take your turn as Chapter Coordinator.

*Your chapter appreciates
your involvement!*

Co-editors: Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss & Paula Schaffner

Editorial Board: David Stocker Bob Short

We welcome submission of articles by Maryknoll Affiliates and Maryknoll Missioners, as well as suggestions for articles. All submissions are subject to editing. We publish articles as appropriate in conjunction with issue themes.

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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**BUILDING THE BELOVED
COMMUNITY:
RACISM AND BEYOND**

Kitty Schiltz – Seattle Chapter



In November, instead of their usual meeting, seven Seattle Affiliates attended the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center’s workshop by that name. It was presented by two Notre Dame Sisters who work with Pax Christi: Patricia Chappell, Executive Director, and Anne Louis Nadeau, Director of Programs. This dynamic duo presented a fast-paced exposé of racism—its history and effects. They defined racism as America’s original sin against people of color, including those of African, African-American, Caribbean, Latino, or Middle Eastern ancestry.

In groups, we discussed why talking about racism is taboo among white people and how we identify ourselves as white. Our group had a mixture of people of color and white. It came down to the belief that white people, mostly in denial of their role in racism, feel shame, fear, or pain when discussing it. White privilege is both conscious and unconscious. Racism combines personal racial prejudice and the misuse of power by systems and institutions.

Dominion in the Americas began in the 1400s when Nicholas V pronounced a Papal Bull giving Christian explorers dominion over all “discovered” lands and peoples who were not Christian. This encouraged the enslavement of all native, non-Christian peoples in Africa and the New World. We reviewed a long list of legislative actions in the US, from the Separate-But-Equal Ruling in 1896 to the education of American

Indian children, Chinese exclusion, Mexican Repatriation, the Japanese-American internment, and the GI Bill of 1944.

Racism cripples all of us. “White” people have internalized racial superiority, and “people of Color” have internalized racial oppression. Celebrating differences instead of

being pitted against the other makes for a society that moves all in a positive direction. To change unjust systems, we must change traditional values to transformational values. Either/or thinking can become both/and, with a bias towards action. A worldview of abundance versus scarcity gets power shared rather than maintaining organizations. Exchanging another traditional value—the secrecy model—for transparent communication brings consensus to decision-making. And the traditional value of individual action, which fosters competition and kills creativity, needs to change to cooperative and collaborative models.

I came to realize the need for conversation in order to get beyond denial and move toward positive dialog and probably reparations. As Christian Americans seeking justice, we need to face up to our role in racism. Though I knew about our history of injustice, I still have not figured out how I personally can do much about it. This workshop helped me focus on the problem. Solutions are still not obvious to me other than dialog and reparations, including real action on equal rights to education and to the law. Somehow, we need to see similarities among people instead of differences. We are all equally loved by the Spirit and have the same Spirit in us.



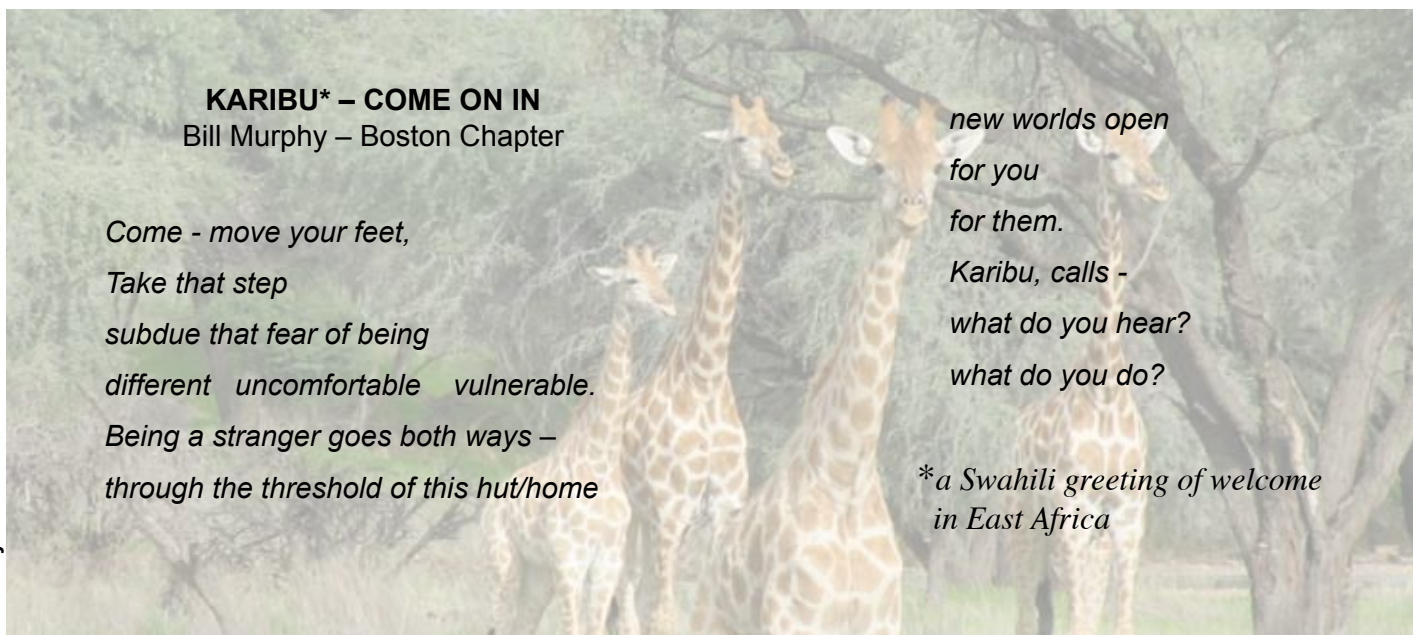
KARIBU* – COME ON IN
Bill Murphy – Boston Chapter

*Come - move your feet,
Take that step
subdue that fear of being
different uncomfortable vulnerable.
Being a stranger goes both ways –
through the threshold of this hut/home*

*new worlds open
for you
for them.
Karibu, calls -
what do you hear?
what do you do?*

**a Swahili greeting of welcome
in East Africa*

Photo by Paula Schaffner



KNOWING IN THE WORDLESS SPACES

Bob Short – Executive Coordinator

At their most recent gathering of the first virtual chapter*, members spontaneously surfaced the thought that maybe there are just too many words attached to almost everything these days... dishonest political words, manipulative marketing words, sanctimonious religious words, ego words that compare, compete, connive, contrast, contrive and, perhaps the biggest offenders, all those unsettling words and scenarios that incessantly play out in our heads. Understandably, some of you reading this might be feeling that this article is itself quickly becoming an offender in this verbosity plague.

Over-explanation separates us from astonishment. – Eugene Ionesco


Words are important. Poetic, truthful words, and others like, *thank you, forgive me, I love you, whoops*, and, for carnivores, *medium rare*, surely have a place. Still, we haven't done very well at sticking to the good words. How can we best get hold of all this?

As the conversation evolved, we talked (admittedly, in words) about those wordless spaces – walking in the forest, standing by the ocean, listening to music, sitting in a chapel, holding a newborn – wherein peace washes over us and we come to know in a

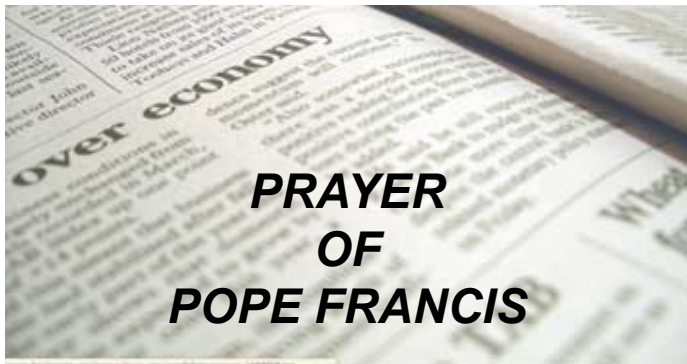
different, peaceful and compelling way. You too might be tempted to add to the list. Hopefully, neither Chardonnay nor Merlot would get many honest votes in this regard.

Mostly, our time together focused on how each of us has come to a place of deeper knowing. Jim Coady

insightfully added that almost always, "We learn more from experiences than from documents." Although not physically present in this virtual community, Richard Rohr helped us out when he wrote that, "*Knowing is the empty space around the words, allowing God to fill in all the gaps in an 'unspeakable' way.*" That could serve as a definition for faith.

From a distance, all this might seem a bit fuzzy and/or dense. Even that characterization will be euphemistic for some. Still, as 2019 begins to unfold and all of us in Maryknoll strive to live with integrity, love, and groundedness in these very uncertain, noisy times, we can gain strength and courage by visiting these wordless spaces. I think that those in the Contemplative Virtual Chapter would concur. 

* Currently, three chapters meet virtually: one of Affiliates who've moved, the Contemplative Virtual Chapter, and an international chapter.



Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Help us to recognize the evil latent in a communication that does not build communion.

Help us to remove the venom from our judgements.

Help us to speak about others as our brothers and sisters.

You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words be seeds of goodness for the world:

- where there is shouting, let us practice listening;
- where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony;
- where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity;
- where there is exclusion, let us offer solidarity;
- where there is sensationalism, let us use sobriety;
- where there is superficiality, let us raise real questions;
- where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust;
- where there is hostility, let us bring respect;
- where there is falsehood, let us bring truth.

Amen.



THE INSPIRATION FOR CHAPTER COMPANIONS

Mary Moritz – Southeast Region Coordinator

As an Affiliate Regional Coordinator, I travel to Maryknoll in Ossining, NY, at least once a year to attend a joint Regional Coordinator/Board Meeting. Every time I go there, I am struck by the wisdom and grace that I find in the Maryknollers who are there. Just one example of this is my second cousin, Fr. Frank “Pancho” Higdon, a Maryknoll Priest now residing there. It is always a joy for me to spend time with him. We both get energized by the sharing of our ideas and experiences.



Mary and Fr. Frank (Pancho) Higdon

At the Affiliate Board Meeting that I attended in October, we split into small groups for discussion and planning purposes. Each small group was invited to develop an idea to test—a prototype—that might bless the Affiliate movement. In our small group, I shared that I would like to develop a program that might allow all Affiliate chapters to benefit from the great wisdom that Maryknollers have. Some chapters, like mine in Florida, didn’t have any such connection. I believed that both the Maryknollers and the chapters would benefit greatly from more frequent sharing.

My group—Ralph Maughan, Jean Menton, Gerry Mullaney, Paula Schaffner, and I—drafted a plan for a Chapter Companions Program, for which we agreed to be the core team. This program allows chapters to ask for a Maryknoller to be their companion. A chapter and its companion could communicate by email, phone, mail, WhatsApp, or Skype. If possible, the companion could visit the chapter.

Depending on their time and energy, a chapter companion could provide a chapter with an opening or closing prayer, or give them information on a topic to discuss at a meeting. Perhaps the companion could sometimes join the meeting, possibly by Skype. The

My hope is that connections will be made around the world between Maryknoll Affiliates and the missionaries with whom we share the Maryknoll charism.—Paula Schaffner

chapter coordinator might want to ask the companion for advice relative to a chapter issue. The companion could pray for the chapter, and the chapter could pray for the companion. The hope would be that this mutual relationship would bloom and grow, and be meaningful and enriching to all concerned.

As of mid-December, the Sisters, the Priests and Brothers, and the Lay Missioners have all agreed to participate. We are excited about the positive response we have received! Now we are working to get the word out to all chapters, wherever they are, that they can have a Maryknoller as a companion. Some chapters already have a Maryknoller who is actively involved with them. We hope that these chapters will “sign on” also, and just let us know about their existing chapter companion.

For more information or to apply for a Chapter Companion for your chapter, please email MaryknollCompanions@gmail.com or contact any member of the Chapter Companions core team.

THE BLESSINGS OF COMPANIONSHIP

Gerry Mullaney – Northeast Ohio Chapter

On a Friends Across Borders (FAB) trip in Tanzania, we listened to Maryknoll Lay Missioner Liz Mach and those being helped at Bugando Medical Center in Mwanza. After hearing their stories and the wonderful work of Liz and others at the hospital, my friend Kathy turned to me and said, “We are with saints.”

The new Maryknoll Affiliates Companions program can provide Affiliate chapters and companions an opportunity to be with saints over time and space far exceeding a short FAB visit and a single hospital tour. And, by the way, the saints can also include our sisters and brothers worldwide with whom Maryknollers walk.

There is such potential in the Companions program to add to the richness of the Affiliate experience. This can take the form of spiritual wisdom, support, and guidance from a Father, Brother, Sister or Lay Missioner. It can also expand our global awareness of the struggle and the witness in Maryknoll mission sites worldwide. Then there is the potential for larger action on the part of Affiliate chapters, whether locally or globally, as we continue to do our best to advance God’s kingdom in the world.



**HOUSTON CHAPTER'S
MARYKNOLL AFFILIATE MISSION**

Judy Horstman – Houston Chapter

On Sunday, November 11, ten Affiliates, along with our own Father Gerry Kelly, MM, gathered in Brazoria County, Texas, to answer the call of the poor. Brazoria County is south of Houston, and, like Houston, was heavily impacted by the flooding associated with Hurricane Harvey. Paula & Dave Schaffner came from California, Mary & John Moritz from Florida, Bob Short from Connecticut, Ron Guidry from New York, and Fr. Gerry, Bob & Ruth Kleeman, and Judy & Dick Horstman from Houston.

Prayer Before Entering a Home

God our Father, we ask you to send down your grace upon us as we enter this home. Help us realize that this is not just a house, but rather the home where their family ate their meals together, raised their children, spent holidays together and told stories to each other. This is the home where they laughed together, as well as cried together, as they shared their sorrows and joys.

As we enter this home, give us the grace to be respectful of their possessions and their dignity We ask you to bless this family today, tomorrow, and each day after. We ask you to help us see Christ in each of them and that they be able to see Christ in each of us. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The team spent the week helping a widow whose trailer home was stripped to the studs following the flood. The team completed the demolition and cleaning, finished replacing the floor, rewired the home, installed insulation, and installed drywall. It was obvious that the Holy Spirit sent the right people with the right skills to get the job done. The team stayed at the Cameron House, which is the former home of



Ruth Kleeman works her magic in the Cameron House kitchen.

the Basilian Fathers in Brazoria County and is owned by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. The Archdiocese has offered the use of the home to any mission group that is willing to help the poorest of the poor who were victims of the flood.

The days began with morning prayers led by Father Gerry and ended with the celebration of Mass and then a mission program presented by one of the Affiliates. Mary and John shared a beautiful meditation from the Maryknoll Sisters in Africa, Paula and Dave took us to Namibia where they had served as missionaries,

Dick Horstman told us about the current attacks on the rights of immigrants, and Bob Kleeman led us on a reflection on Mission. Ruth kept the group well fed with gourmet breakfasts and dinners, and provided sack lunches for the worksite.

On Friday afternoon, the team visited Nada, Texas, the home of Father Ed Schoellmann, MM,



Fr. Kelly presides at team's evening Mass, with Bob Kleeman, Mary Moritz, Ruth Kleeman, and Ron Guidry in view.



John Moritz and Bob Kleeman confer about the water heater.



Mary Moritz and the other women pulled staples, screwed down the floorboards, installed insulation, and helped hang sheetrock.

who is currently serving in Africa. It was a trip back to another time. Father Ed's brother and sister-in-law gave us a tour of Father Ed's home (which should be a museum), St. Mary's Catholic Church and Cemetery, and the garage owned by Father Ed's nephew. The afternoon ended in Leo's, the only tavern in town, where we met a number of Father Ed's relatives and friends.

Any group looking for a place to do a home repair mission should contact Bob at brklee@att.net or Dick Horstman at rhors6970@aol.com. Bob and Dick work with Catholic Charities, which helps groups identify projects and pays for materials, and they can schedule groups for the Cameron House. Groups can manage their own projects, as our group did, or they can just show up and St. Bernard Project in Brazoria County will provide project management, tools, and materials.



Bob Short pitched in where needed—electrical, caulking,...



Dave Schaffner mostly worked outside, but tried his hand at carpentry.



Bob Kleeman presents the team's gift of a crucifix to Carol, the homeowner.



Paula Schaffner, Dick Horstman, Ron Guidry, and Judy Horstman work together on hanging sheetrock, while in the background, John and Mary Moritz work on electrical and clean windows.

SUSTAINING HURUMA

Bertha Haas – Portland Chapter

Having served nine years in Tanzania as a Maryknoll Lay Missioner, I return annually to visit my favorite project, Huruma, a Special Education Unit. This year I visited in August. As we start a new school year here, Huruma students are well into their second semester. So many awe-inspiring developments in the past year!

Beginning January 2019, five elementary schools in our district have been selected to begin inclusion of students with disabilities. At least fifteen Huruma deaf and/or physically impaired students in grades 4-7 will begin attending classes at Pasiansi Elementary School, enthusiastically welcomed by the Head Teacher.



Training in life skills is now possible because of a donor-built wall keeping out the goats, cows and careless passersby. The garden begun in April survived the dry season, providing greens for the students' daily meal, as well as food for their families, with enough left for sale. Avocado trees and flowers flourish. The seven tire swings bring joy to the students. It was great to see teachers take students outside for instruction.

In addition to the gardening program, parents are promoting a peanut butter industry. Carpentry is picking up again. Perhaps tailoring will be able to resume also.

My heart overflows with gratitude for the dedicated staff at Huruma and our generous donors who make it possible.

The one sad spot is that staff did not receive a raise in July to offset inflation. To remedy that, it's imperative that we have a successful Taste of Tanzania on February 16, 2019. Can't attend? Participate by sending your donation to Huruma Chapter KILEO, PO Box 244, Cornelius, OR 97113.



UPDATE FROM MISSOULA

Barb and Hans Zuuring – Missoula Affiliates

This has been a busy year for us, with involvement in several issues, but also a time for celebration.

- **Active Nonviolence.** In March, University of Montana's Christ the King Newman Center presented Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International, speaking on "Active Non-violence: A Paradigm Shift to a More Peaceful World." Focusing on social justice, she urged a move beyond violence and perpetual war, with references to the book, *Opting Out of War: Strategies to Prevent Violent Conflict*, by Mary B. Anderson and Marshall Wallace. Nonviolence is based on the beatitudes: "Be the change you wish to see in this world!"
- **Death Penalty.** Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., author of "Dead Man Walking" will deliver the fall 2018 lecture on November 6th and will address her work on abolition of the death penalty.
- **Immigration.** We have participated in two demonstrations in support of migrants at our borders and against unlawful detention of migrants, and we plan to host a forum at Blessed Trinity parish in the fall.
- **40th Anniversary.** We visited with Father Stephen Judd, MM, at his recent celebration of 40 years as a Maryknoll missionary, hosted by his brother Marti and wife Betsy of Missoula. Surprisingly, we still had a copy of the July/August 1995 *Maryknoll* magazine with Fr. Judd on its cover. He was in rural Chile holding aloft the "cross of life," with the caption, "Studded with locally produced grains and fruits, the cross symbolizes God's encompassing love for all people and all creation." That issue's theme, *Welcoming the Stranger*, explored the "challenge to care for both immigrants and refugees in an increasingly hostile society."



EASY MEETING— GLOBAL VISION

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss –
Portland Chapter

The Maryknoll Affiliate Pillars of Spirituality, Community, Global Vision, and Action are all great topics for an Affiliate meeting, especially when inviting new people who may not know much about Maryknoll.



Affiliate Gabriela Maertens and Kevin Carroll, Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, with world map used at the Mission Nonviolence lunch. with world map used at the Mission Nonviolence lunch.

At our Affiliate luncheon on the last day of the Northwest Mission Nonviolence mini regional conference, we invited visitors to join us and we focused on the Maryknoll Affiliates' pillar of Global Vision. To emphasize Global Vision, we planned our meal to have a Middle Eastern flavor.

Preparation:

1. Plan a meal, possibly potluck, possibly based on a particular culture's cuisine.
2. Obtain supplies:
 - A. A fairly large world map (preferably find at home or borrow)
 - B. Tape for attaching the map to a wall
 - C. Post-It notes – about 5 per attendee
 - D. Pens for writing on the Post-It notes
3. Choose someone to lead/read the prayers.
4. You don't need to ask the participants to prepare; in fact, it might be better if they don't learn about the meeting plan beforehand.

Meeting Plan:

Before the meal, we posted a large world map on the wall and gave everyone several small Post-It notes. We asked everyone to:

- Think of the places in the world where they feel connected to someone.
- For each place, write on a sticky note: their own name and the name of the person(s) they connect to that place—perhaps their family emigrated from there, their children now live there, they've spent time in that country, they know someone in mission there, or they know people who originated there.
- Stick these notes on the map to show where in the world where they feel connected to someone.

Our map was almost covered with notes. We were globally connected!

Start the meal with a prayer, which could be spontaneous or written beforehand. We remembered those people we feel connected to around the world, the good things that are going on, and the people and places we hold in our hearts.

Over our meal, we had many conversations with each other about our global connections. Afterwards, everyone had the opportunity to share at least one of their connections with the larger group.

Discussion. Although many of us knew of each other's mission trips, we learned more about what was important to each person, where they felt connected. Those who were new to the group, or not prone to talking about themselves, were also now willing to mention their connections, some of which were new to the rest of us. This easy camaraderie sparked by our sharing led to conversations about immigration, advocacy for peace, living in other cultures, and humanitarian efforts abroad.

Closing Prayer. A prayer about seeing God in many cultures would be fitting. This one is from the *Maryknoll Book of Prayer*.

A Prayer for Missioners

By Fr. Joseph Veneroso, MM

*God, help me to 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 to realize
how much you love, forgive, and care for them.*



NICARAGUA: SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Kitty Madden – Nicaragua Affiliate

Catherine “Kitty” Madden has lived and worked in Nicaragua since 1986, first as a Maryknoll Lay Missioner, then as a Maryknoll Affiliate. Read her unabridged article at <https://maryknollogc.org/article/nicaragua-speaking-truth-power>.

In August, we gathered to mourn the death of our neighbor, “Juan,” killed by a sniper who fired on a peaceful protest, and to share our sympathies with his mother, wife, and children.

Just last April, Nicaragua was still hailed as “the most peaceful country in Central America.” Many people entered the country each day, to provide humanitarian aid, to enjoy its beauty and the people’s warm hospitality or to invest in its thriving economy. On the surface, things seemed quite perfect! However, just as with its volcanoes, something very charged was growing beneath the surface. No one could have imagined the catastrophic changes about to emerge.

In 32 years, I lived under the revolutionary Sandinista government in the 1980s. The FSLN (Sandinista national liberation front) had toppled the dictator Anastasio Somoza and his family dynasty in an insurrection that claimed 50,000 lives. In the 1980s, I anguished at the US backing (if not instigation) of the Contra War that ended in 1990, after taking another 30,000 lives and maiming thousands of others.

After three neo-liberal presidencies—1990 to 2006—another dictatorship developed, headed by Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo and their FSLN party. People began to carefully monitor their words or remain silent for fear of reprisals. Since his election in 2006, Daniel Ortega has moved to consolidate power, control, and wealth. And, yes, there have been “gifts” given, such as food, housing, scholarship programs, and perks for business leaders. The price? Silence, gratitude, loyalty. Any other entity serving the people, such as the Casa Materna Mary Ann Jackman clinic, was treated as a potential rival and a threat.

When university students launched a national protest on April 18 to demand not gifts but freedom of expression, the government responded with unexpected, unbridled ferocity. The Ortega government ordered police to fire real bullets to quell the student uprising on April 18-19. The students had gathered in support of pensioners, to protest changes in social security benefits. Previous protests against government policies had been quelled by police shooting rubber bullets or Sandinista youth gangs shoving and beating demonstrators.

Twenty-five people were killed in five days, and dozens more were seriously wounded. As people found their voices, the “volcano of submerged feelings” began to erupt with unbridled energy. As one man expressed it: “People have lost their fear of speaking out. And Daniel has lost the people.”

By May 30th—Mothers’ Day in Nicaragua, over 100 people had been killed. Most were young and many had been shot with one bullet to the head or heart. Over 600,000 people gathered in Managua that day to march with the grief-stricken mothers. Again, the police and snipers attacked; twenty were killed and close to a hundred wounded. The people now lament, “Mother’s Day will never be the same. Nicaragua will never be the same.”



Protest in Managua, Nicaragua on April 24, 2018, photo by Voices of America/Public Domain.

Each day, the count rises. By early August, over 350 were dead, 3,000-plus wounded, 1,200 imprisoned without legal rights, many tortured, and hundreds “disappeared”—perhaps hiding out if not already dead, and thousands were leaving the country every day. Recently, 200 medical personnel who had aided the wounded or dying have lost their jobs in public hospitals or universities. City streets are traveled not by tourists but by hooded and masked “paramilitaries” armed with high caliber weapons. Airlines that arrived twice a day now have flights only three times a week and numerous hotels and restaurants have been closed; of course, thousands have lost their jobs.

Yet, something vital and courageous is happening. People are regaining their voices and speaking truth to power. They do so at great cost and risk of death, but the civic alliance that has been formed is strongly committed to walking a nonviolent path. There is a pilgrimage of great pain and unspeakable grief. Please join in the Nicaraguans’ journey of solidarity through the support of your prayers.



News from the Board

A PRESENCE WITH PAST CONNECTIONS

Sr. Norie Mojado, MM –
Maryknoll Affiliate Board Member



About my background: I was born in the Philippines. After I finished Nursing training and worked for a year in the Philippines, I ventured out to work in the US and Canada. It was in Montreal that I decided to become a missionary. I entered Maryknoll in 1976 and was assigned to Korea in 1978, where I worked in a

I had been involved with the Maryknoll Affiliates since the first conference of Maryknoll Affiliates held here at Maryknoll and was a part-time member of the Westchester Chapter before I returned to Korea. In Korea, some other Sisters and I decided to invite the Maryknoll Fathers in Korea to join us in starting a Maryknoll Affiliate Chapter there. However, it was not accepted by some of the members, although a couple of Maryknoll Fathers, including Russ Feldmeier, joined us occasionally.

Psychiatric Clinic. In 1984, I did pastoral ministry with the urban poor, living in an integrated community of clergy, religious and lay people. We made home visits, listened to people’s issues and needs, organized scripture study groups, and gave spiritual direction and pastoral counseling. From 1988-90, I continued to work with the urban poor and with Korean factory workers in other areas. Then I returned to Maryknoll, NY, for Congregational Service, and when I went back to Korea, I continued my work with women and also with migrant workers and women married to Koreans. After several years I returned to NY to do another Congregational Service and later on was elected to our leadership.

The Maryknoll Sisters decided to have a retreat with the prospective interested members, and at the end of the retreat, we explained about the Affiliate program—the covenant, etc., and each one of them decided to join. There were about eight to ten members at that time. We had monthly reflection and study of the covenant and other articles about the Affiliate movement. They had faithfully come to monthly meetings, even though they were not officially accepted as Maryknoll Affiliates. After ten years, they finally got approval, when the Maryknoll Affiliate Board were given the responsibility to approve new chapters.

Because of my interest in our Affiliate movement, I am happy to be one of the liaisons to the Maryknoll Affiliates. It has been a delight to get to know many Affiliates and see the wonderful works you are involved in for the sake of the Gospel.



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Find the complete schedule through September and application forms at:

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