



Not So Far Afield

NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

May/June 2020

Volume 29 Number 3



MAC POSTPONED

The Corona Virus delays our gathering.

After so much preparation, and realizing that many Affiliates have already purchased plane tickets or otherwise have taken steps in preparation, the decision to postpone the Maryknoll Affiliate Conference (MAC) was not an easy one. We considered every available angle and, at the end, the decision to cancel for now was the only viable option.

The overriding consideration was that there is too much uncertainty to allow any of us (participants, presenters, and team members) to continue planning with any confidence. The fact that registrations had essentially stopped was another indicator.

Many experts say this virus pandemic will go on well into the summer; Graymoor has shut down with no clear idea when to re-open; the keynote, Nancy Sylvester agrees; due to the virus, many international Affiliates are unable even to get an interview to apply for visas; airline ticket availability is uncertain; etc., etc. As Celine Woznica, one MAC team member, wrote, "...even if the pandemic would be on the decrease by June, they [her Chapter] would be hesitant to fly. Most of them are in their 70s and 80s and would be concerned about some residual chance of infection."

We will set a new date for the MAC—most probably in 2021—once there is enough certainty to do so. Reimbursements for those who had already paid have been mailed out.

If you have questions or comments, contact Bob at: affiliatebshort@gmail.com.

It's not too early to start looking forward to a MAC 2021!

MISSIONERS RESPOND TO THE PANDEMIC

Maryknoll Affiliates in Mission

Guatemala – *Caminando Por la Paz* mission of Affiliates in Guatemala City: Ron Covey, Affiliate, reported he is back home in Houston, and Carlos Miranda, Guatemala Affiliate, said that Guatemala has closed its borders and schools. Caminando has set up handwashing stations, but cannot host tutoring, have activities for children, or make normal home visits. They are giving bread to their neighbors and provided a cell phone plan for the students who can receive on-line classes.

Haiti - Renate Schneider, Affiliate: "With Haiti entering lockdown, I reserved a seat on a charter flight taking non-Haitians to the US, not knowing when I'll be able to return." For a more complete report, visit her website, haitianconnection.org/2020/04/08/haiti-in-times-of-the-corona-virus/.

Nicaragua - Kitty Madden, Affiliate: "Know that I am OK, sheltering in place in my beloved Matagalpa." Kitty forwarded an online article describing the situation there:

While the rest of the world scrambles to come up with prevention strategies to contain the coronavirus, Nicaragua's acting president, Rosario Murillo, has a novel plan for the American continent's second poorest country:

- Doctors and nurses are forbidden to use masks so as not to alarm the population.
- Going against the grain of all neighboring countries, the Nicaraguan government continues to promote tourism, public gatherings and pro-government rallies and its beaches.
- Likewise, public schools have remained open and students threatened with failing if they don't attend for tests. (havanatimes.org/opinion/nicaragua-is-safe-thanks-to-god-and-companera-rosario/)

Maryknoll Lay Missioners were given the option to come home or stay in their mission country.



Continued on page 3

CHOOSING HOW TO CONNECT

Inspired by Richard Rohr, Rich Lessard, Affiliate Board chair, asks Affiliates, "... How can we transform the collective pain from this pandemic in ways that can unify and strengthen our collective resolve and commitment to live out the mission of Maryknoll?" In a retreat, the Boston Affiliates asked themselves, and now us, as we shelter in place, "Who do we choose to be?"

In this issue Affiliates show that while this pandemic has clearly demonstrated that we are all connected, there are many paths to living out our mission. The Affiliate Board suggests: We connect with each other and the world using new tools. In Peru: We are advisors to the youth. In Merida: We acknowledge and celebrate the role of Maryknoll in our lives.

We look for new ways to influence our world even when we can't safely leave our shelter. We work as partners with missionaries abroad and with other organizations. We look to the indigenous for their cultural wisdom. We reach out in concern for those suffering at the US border. We join in Pope Francis's call in *Laudato Si'* to renew the earth.

How are you transforming your pain? Who do you choose to be?



Not So Far Afield (NSFA) is a bimonthly publication of the Maryknoll Affiliates and is also available online at MaryknollAffiliates.org. The name is a play on the title of the original Maryknoll Magazine: The Field Afar. Affiliates share in the mission and family spirit of Maryknoll Sisters, Fathers and Brothers, and Lay Missioners.

Mission Statement: Maryknoll Affiliates, while continuing to pursue their own life's journey, commit themselves to the mission goals of Maryknoll in the context of Chapters that gather for prayer, reflection, and action. Maryknoll Affiliates challenge one another to witness to mission as a way of life by going beyond borders, locally and globally, walking with the poor and excluded, and striving for peace and justice for all of God's creation.

For further information, see MaryknollAffiliates.org or contact Executive Coordinator Bob Short, email Affiliatebshort@gmail.com, or write to:

Maryknoll Affiliates
P.O. Box 311
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311

TRAVEL THE WORLD WHILE SAFE AT HOME?

Beginning in April, Karen Bortvedt Estrada, Maryknoll Lay Missioners' Recruitment and Relationship Manager, is hosting **#MeetAMissionerMonday**, a series of Facebook and YouTube Live conversations with Maryknoll Lay Missioners around the globe.

The series is scheduled to run Mondays at 10 am EDT, and the video will also be viewable as a video recording afterwards. If you tune in live, you can ask your own questions of our missionaries.



Meet a Missioner Monday

Interviews with **Susan Nagele** in East Africa and **Kathy Bond** in Brazil are available on video.

On May 4, **Anne Berry** and **George Stablein** will update us on the situation at their hospital in Tanzania and share a bit about their ministry before and after COVID-19.

Look for **Maryknoll Lay Missioners** on Facebook or YouTube and share the talks with your friends.



Not So Far Afield Co-Editors:

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss & Paula Schaffner

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

Submissions: We welcome letters to the editor, articles, photos, and suggestions for articles. All submissions are subject to editing. Please contact us at the address below.

Subscriptions: To report a change of address, subscribe, unsubscribe, or change to/from print or digital versions, email: NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org, or write to:

NSFA, c/o Maryknoll Affiliates
P.O. Box 311
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311

Missioners Respond – Continued from page 1

Tanzania – *Angelica Ruppe* came home to Oregon because medical care in Tanzania would be hard to get. She worries about the disabled and poor children she worked with who struggle to survive in normal times. The Rosemiriam Dagg Center, where she served, has been closed since the president of Tanzania ordered all schools closed.

Bolivia - *Tawny Thanh* and *Hiep Vu* chose to stay in Bolivia, but are required to isolate themselves and can only go out one assigned day a week for 5 hours. Hiep is especially worried about the poor for whom Spanish is a second language since all virus information is in Spanish. The poor might come into town not knowing the new rules and be arrested for breaking the isolation.

El Salvador - *Melissa Altman* reported, “Our best bet for surviving this pandemic is to stay home [in El Salvador] and find ways to continue our relationships with the people at our ministries without being physically present—a challenge, but also an opportunity.” Her ministry, “the women’s cooperative ACOMUJERZA, has come to a screeching halt. We were in the middle of a huge order for the Education Ministry of El Salvador. ... We are sewing over 3,000 school uniforms, biggest order we have ever been contracted to make. ACOMUJERZA members packed up all of the finished uniforms and prepared the building for the beginning of a nationwide mandatory quarantine on Saturday, March 21.”

Cambodia – *Russ Brine*: “There is no shelter in place or lock-down of the country, although the schools are closed and there has been a lot of guidance about social distancing and hygiene. ... Thailand is experiencing increasing cases and thousands of Cambodian migrant workers have recently been returning to Cambodia from Thailand.”



Photo by Russ Brine

Haiti – *Abby Belt*, in Gros Morne, wrote for the Catholic News Service: No one is allowed in or out of this country unless they are transporting merchandise, and we are severely undersupplied to try to combat this virus. A lockdown as well as social distancing are not going to be easy to implement here. Most people here work in the informal economy,

and particularly in the informal settlements of Port-au-Prince; many people live in close and cramped quarters without safe access to water and sanitation.

Kenya - *Mike Garr*: “The Kenyan government has imposed a nightly curfew, has closed schools and churches and has urged people here to shelter in place. Some missionaries chose to leave but I felt too nervous to fly during this time and safer to stay here than to be in the U.S. ... In Mombasa, all the major markets closed; they are the source that supplies all the street vendors who in return sell to the locals. We are expecting food to become scarce and money to be extremely tight. People here live hand to mouth, so many will be suffering and violence and crime are likely to escalate.”

Ted Miles, Director, “... we ask you to keep all of our lay missionaries and their communities in your fervent prayers! Please join us in prayer by posting your own special intentions in our “Virtual Chapel (mklm.org/virtual-chapel/).”

**Maryknoll Affiliate Chapters**

Many chapters in the US, including Los Angeles, San Diego, New Orleans, Seattle, Albany, and Portland, are using video conferencing to come together. See Page 11 of this NSFA for additional meeting ideas.

During the Seattle Chapter meeting, Al and Jerrie Drinkwine told of their February return trip to the US –Mexican border. Because thousands of refugees are being forced to remain in Mexico, Sister Anne Connolly takes human basic needs and food to refugees in Matamoros, Mexico. Desperately needed donations can be made through <https://www.catholiccharitiesrgv.org/respitcenter/donation.aspx>.

The pandemic limits our ability to gather in public but we can work on a phone bank to get out the vote, sew facemasks, send advocacy letters to the editor and to Congress, write those NSFA articles we’ve been meaning to get to, and connect with Affiliates, chapter companions, friends, and family who are also isolated.

Send NSFA your reports on the pandemic’s effect on you and your ongoing mission work.



**12TH ANNIVERSARY
OF YUCATÁN CHAPTER**

Cecilia Quijano –
Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapter,
Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

In June 2019, the Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapter Affiliates celebrated our 12th Anniversary. In 2007, when 12 people signed the covenant, we celebrated with Fred Goddard, Fr. John Martin, and Sr. Terry Maksym, MM. To celebrate our 12th anniversary, the current 15 Affiliates renewed their commitment. We enjoyed the presence and personal advice of Fr. John at the beginning of our walk as a chapter. However, seven years ago, the Maryknoll Fathers handed over their work to the local diocese, and since then we have continued as a group of lay people discovering new leaders, inspirations, and difficulties. We continue to enjoy the constant support of Fr. John, who now connects with us from Maryknoll, NY, and during his twice-yearly visits.

Our Mass of celebration of commitment was officiated by Fr. Raúl Lugo, who commented that the church is enriched by diversity; indeed, our group can be characterized as diversite—in ages, formation, and apostolates. After the Mass, at our convivial dinner we read together the covenant to renew our commitment and some messages that had been sent on the occasion of the event from Fr. John Martin; our sister Rosa Beatriz de Larios, Guatemala Chapter; and Rich Lessard, President of the Affiliate

Board. This reminds us that we are part of a larger movement.

On this special day, we also celebrated the founding of Maryknoll in 1912, and that, as specific as our actions may seem, they join the many others inspired by the objectives we agreed to uphold. Then, Affiliate Carmen Aké, who was in China for a few weeks, communicated by video call.

This year, we have many aspirations, and we see clearly a greater opportunity to promote the missionary spirit in the local church. Through our diocesan Father Lorenzo Mex’s efforts, and with the support of Mega-Media Communications Company, a presentation was



2009: Fr. John Martin also attended Our Ladsy of Guadalupe Chapter’s 2nd Anniversary celebration. See his 2019 story: maryknollmagazine.org/2019/05/maryknoll-legacy-alive-yucatan-mexico/.

made about the work of the Maryknoll Fathers and Sisters during the 69 years they served in the Yucatan Peninsula. We have shown it in parishes around the state of Yucatán, including villages that have enjoyed the presence of Maryknoll.



Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapter at our recent retreat.

Wherever we have taken the exhibit, people have commented on the impact of Maryknoll when missionaries were in Yucatan; that impact remains today, many years later. We can say with certainty that this work still continues through the actions of people who have met Maryknoll missionaries and been inspired by their efforts. We know that, as a Chapter of Affiliates, we too have a great responsibility to live in testimony to mission.



ADVISING THE YOUTH IN PERU
 Carlos Apcho – Lima Peru Chapter

“Young people are not the future, they are the present.”

Pope Francis, in his recent document to the youth, *Vive Cristo* (# 64), says: “We cannot just say that young people are the future of the world. They are the present.” Their testimony invites us, like them, to see life with expectation, to set goals without fear. They are the ones who revitalize a community of people with their joy and fill it with hope. The challenge they pose to the elderly is “to motivate them to follow ideals that lead them to be better citizens and not fall for criticizing them.” This is my experience as an advisor to “Kerygma,” the youth group in the parish of San Francisco de Asís, here in Lima, Peru. [Kerygma, Greek for “proclamation,” refers primarily to the preaching of the Apostles as recorded in the New Testament.]

As an advisor, I recall that some years ago, when I was a member of the Youth Ministry, I met young people from other parishes. I can say of those young people, and of those with whom I currently live, that they respond to being treated as young people who find their way and develop the gifts that God has given them. They just need to be welcomed with affection and understanding, and to feel that their proposals are considered, because they favor the common good of society.



**Their message translated:
 Stay in your house. Christ loves you
 and the country needs you.
 Sincerely, Kerygma**

Many young people who belong to the Youth Ministry come from broken families, which affects their emotional and intellectual growth, but by serving in an atmosphere of joy, their hearts are filled with love for themselves and others.

The majority of young people in this part of Lima have migrant mothers and fathers who came to live in the capital to escape poverty or the terrorism of the 80s and 90s. Their parents have tried hard to satisfy their basic needs and to support them while they become professionally trained, continuing their studies at institutes and at the university.

As a youth advisor from my Parish and from my country, I offer them formation in the spirituality, mission, and courage of the Maryknoll missionaries who came to Peru and gave themselves to the population. The testimony of their lives moves young people to be brave in this life, to be people of prayer, and to put their talents at the service of others.



WHO DO WE CHOOSE TO BE?

Mef Ford – Boston Chapter

In February, ten Boston Affiliates met at the Maryknoll Sisters' seaside vacation house in Watch Hill, RI, with our invited retreat leader, Sr. Teresa Baldini, member of the Maryknoll Sisters Contemplative Community. We chose our theme from Margaret Wheatley's most recent book, *Who Do We Choose to Be? – Facing Reality – Claiming Leadership – Restoring Sanity*, using several excerpts to prepare for the weekend; these are just a few:

We can no longer solve the global problems of this time at large-scale levels—poverty, economics, climate change, violence, dehumanization—without political courage, collaboration across national boundaries, and compassion that supersedes self-interest and greed.

We are impotent to influence those in power who ignore our efforts. The powerful always defend the status quo because it is the source of their power and privilege. Any change that benefits others would destroy their position.

It is possible to use our power and talents to create islands of sanity in the midst of a raging destructive sea. So much is possible if we consciously and wisely choose how best to step forward as leaders for this time.

*We cannot change the way the world is,
but by opening to the world as it is,
we may discover that gentleness, decency,
and bravery are available,
not only to us, but to all human beings.
—Chögyam Trungpa, Buddhist Teacher*

Terry's gentle voice and short presentations were followed by honest dialogue. As she said, "I don't know what I've said until I know what you've heard." We also reflected privately during a long walk in the crisp salty air, or a nap, in keeping with the weekend's contemplative tone. "We come to retreat not necessarily for insights or for more information but rather for transformation." Perhaps, as Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche suggests, "by opening to the world as it is."

*Forgiveness is the gift we give ourselves
as well as the other.*



Photos by Bill Murphy

To the world as it is? Seriously? This world? Does that include being open to positions we don't agree with and people we can't stand? Our "Surface Mind" is anxious or annoyed about many things, competes, compares, blames and controls, and displaces our center. The "Quiet Mind," is learning to be comfortable with paradox and mystery, does not put expectations on others, holds diversity and pain constructively, and has the ability to relate with different personalities.

Forgiveness is the choice not to suffer.

Does opening to the world as it is extend to forgiveness of those who have hurt or wronged us? Our esteemed retreat guide said yes. "Forgiveness is the gift we give ourselves as well as the other. It is the act of freeing ourselves from the pain, isolation, hatred, anger or resentment caused by the words or actions of another so that we can increase our capacity to love. Forgiveness is the choice not to suffer." These can sound like noble ideas easy to endorse until we bring to mind particular people and incidents.

Terry told a powerful story. During 18 years in Sudan, she and another sister had established a house of prayer and healing. In the market one day, she was at the stall of a Muslim Arab man from the north when a woman with two small children and a baby on her back leaned against the makeshift shop to rest after

walking there from her village. This so angered him that he came out of the stall and kicked her in the stomach, sending her sprawling on the ground. Terry helped her up and was so angry, she said to the man, "If I could, I would spit on you." Whereupon, he spit on her. She wiped her face, threw his spit on the ground, and with the help of two Sudanese men was able to get the woman to a small clinic. For weeks afterward, she thought, how could I ever forgive such a man?

How would you describe an enemy?

Terry asked us, how would you describe an enemy? For weeks after the Sudan incident, as she struggled to arrive at forgiveness, the answer a woman there gave to that question helped her: "I believe my enemy is anyone who has wounded my heart but does not know the wounds that are already there. And I, in turn, do not know the wounds of the one who is hurting me. I know no one can hurt me unless it comes from an unhealed wound in that person."

I believe my enemy is anyone who has wounded my heart but does not know the wounds that are already there.

Addressing the "enemy" question, we shared stories. Thinking of a neighbor who wronged me, but whom I have no interest in approaching, I realized that I can forgive myself for not wanting anything to do with her

at this time. What imprisoned me was not so much the original incident but the nagging feeling that I should do something more about it, even though I had done nothing wrong. Instead, I can accept that I am all right as I am and be at peace with my disinclination, and also be open to being led. At another time, I might have a different impulse. If not, that's okay too.

Forgiveness brought mention of the Catholic practice of confession. The inimitable Bob Short told the story of his six-year-old brother's confessing having eaten meat on a Friday. In the confessional, this was met with silence. Then, Priest: "What else?" A pause. "Well, carrots, potatoes..."

It is possible to use our power and talents to create islands of sanity in the midst of a raging destructive sea.

Facilitated in no small part by these annual retreats, we are a lively and connected group. Our bracing and sometimes daring dialogue included quite a bit of humor, as well as some touching disclosures. Cementing our bond were the six fabulous meals we took turns preparing and a robust happy hour Saturday afternoon. The retreat closed Sunday morning with a tender, reflective, intimate prayer service.

*We—all of us—are loved as we are.
We will be whoever we choose to be.
Alone and together.
Amen, alleluia.*



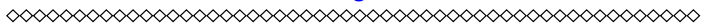
Members of the Boston Chapter enjoying one of the retreat's communal meals are (clockwise, starting at center front) Ed Wheeler, Bob Short, Edith Shea, Sr. Theresa Baldini, MM, Trudy Wheeler, Bill Gilligan, Tom Kelly, Mary Elizabeth (Mef) Ford, and Sr. Jeanne Rancourt, MM. Not pictured is Bill Murphy, who took the photo.



POPE ANNOUNCES LAUDATO SI' WEEK
May 16-24, 2020

Laudato Si' Week, marking the 5th anniversary of the publication of Pope Francis's encyclical on integral human ecology, is planned for Catholics worldwide to encourage care for our common home. "The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor cannot wait anywhere," Pope Francis says.

Thinking creatively, we can find pandemic-safe ways to participate, such as engaging elected representatives, divesting from fossil fuels, planting a tree, or other symbolic gesture. See more suggested actions and links to online training and a comprehensive toolkit at laudatosiweek.org.



DISTANCING SOCIABLY

Who knows, possibly by the time this issue hits the newsstands, the end of social distancing, an artifact of a very uncomfortable spring, will be in sight. Or it may have become our way of life for the foreseeable future. Did you embrace it, pooh-pooh it, do your best but chafe at the loss of physical contact with friends and relatives?

Social distancing and sheltering in place impacted the lives of the Not So Far Afield's co-editors in many ways: Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss and her husband, Manny, driving south to attend an event in Los Angeles, were visiting her co-editor/sister and husband when word came that the event had been cancelled. Paula Schaffner and her husband, David, enjoyed Mary and Manny's company for another day before they headed back north. We braved a walk along a lonely stretch of beach cliffs, thankful that some things were still allowed.

The ripple effect of cancellations takes over our lives—no church attendance, no workouts at the gym, no eating out at restaurants, family events postponed indefinitely. Along with the Olympics, MAC 2020 gets delayed to 2021. As merely our activities

are constricted, we see the pain around us of people losing work, school, and the cash flow to keep their lives together, not to mention possible illness and death. And the most loving thing we can do for our community is to stay home while we follow the daily reports on the pandemic's trajectory.

We learn a new lifestyle—Skype or FaceTime with our grandchildren, reading more, solitary walks (being careful to pass others at a six-foot distance), following Facebook friends. And we're probably not alone in seeing that we have time to sort out piles that have accumulated on our desks and counters.

As I sorted, I unearthed a few gifts from the past. I share this one from Sr. Ann Hayden, MM:

Life Threads

Looking for connections
 While staying open to surprise;
 Attentive to the now and
 Receptive to change;
 Knowing in freedom when to let go
 And when to hold close;

Rooted in love, ready to imagine and dream
 the whole anew, we gather
 To weave the struggles and challenges of life,
 Revealing the common call;
 Affirming the uncommon passion and
 Wrapping each other in the warm mantle of
 guiding stars
 As each candle lights another, another
 and another,
 The journey continues.



Paula and Mary take advantage of the rare opportunity to confer in person over the layout of the NSFA.

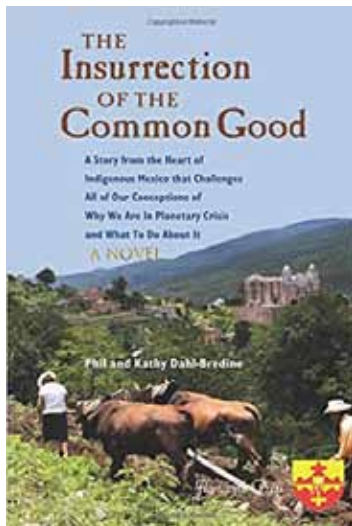
CULTURAL WISDOM

David Schaffner* – California Central Coast Chapter

Review of *The Insurrection of the Common Good*

By Phil and Kathy Dahl-Bredine

The Dahl-Bredines, former Maryknoll Lay Missioners, are social activists who have lived and worked in Oaxacan villages since 2001. While this book is a novel, the authors' intent is to inform the reader of the rich history and culture of the Mixtec peoples of Oaxaca and show how the resource-gluttonous so-called developed world is in conflict with all indigenous societies. And that Mother Earth is suffering due to over consumption and its resulting pollution and contaminants.



The cast: Armando, a young man recently returned to his village; his sister Elena, an environmental activist; her partner Miguel, an investigative journalist; and Susana, who works for an NGO that fronts for Green Energy, e.g. wind farm investments (and while having spent some time in Mexico, flew in from New York City and its concrete canyons and towers).

The reader learns about the Mixtec culture: their land is farmed and grazed communally, many traditions surround their fiestas, their reverence for the earth, their respect for elders and for all living beings, and Gueza—the system of mutual aid that is part of indigenous village tradition. Of particular interest is the practice of Milpa—planting corn, beans, and squash

together. Milpa makes sense not only nutritionally but agronomically, as the Mixtecs and other cultures of Mesoamerica understood the idea of nitrogen-fixing legumes long before the concept was identified by Wilfarth Hellreigel in 1888.

The novel also describes the intersection of extortion and violence, in government, development projects, and unfortunately many other commercial activities in Mexico. I know that the avocado in my supermarket grown in the state of Michoacan is protected in the field and on its journey to the packing house by armed guards.

While the messaging may be heavy-handed at times, I would guess that the authors make no apology for their approach of using entertainment to provide education. I appreciate that they differentiated between GMO and hybrid corn. Often confused with GMO by the layperson, hybrid corn seed (which also cannot be saved and reused by farmers) is an integral technological development that has vastly improved US corn yields over the past eighty years.

I won't be a spoiler as to Armando and Susana's relationship, but at one point, "They had kissed goodnight and she had stumbled exhausted into bed." What happened next? Find out by reading *The Insurrection of the Common Good*. Lack of time is not an excuse in the time of pandemic.



*I did earn a B.S. in Agronomy at the University of California, Davis, but it was 60 years ago, back in the dark ages.



Purchase this book directly from the nonprofit Instituto Paz en Las Americas and 40% of the price will support the Dahl-Bredine's charitable efforts. \$22.95 plus \$5 shipping. Contact mariadb74@yahoo.com to order. Also available from Floricanto Press and on Kindle via Amazon.



A NOTE ABOUT TRAVEL

Martha Gies – Portland Chapter

I have wonderful memories of 20 years of *Traveler's Mind* (writers' workshops), where we studied abroad, but find I can no longer justify continuing to make airplane trips nor, certainly, to blithely invite another dozen people to do so every year.

As Greta Thunberg told the room full of world leaders last year at the World Economic Forum at Davos: "Our house is on fire ... We have to stop the emissions of Greenhouse gases." It is one thing to put her picture on the front of *Time* Magazine; another to heed her words.

My friend Melissa and I have had a long-standing agreement to make a trip together to South America the first winter after she retires from teaching Spanish, and that day has come. Our three weeks in Uruguay will also mark my own final trip by plane.



Note: If you like to write, you are encouraged to visit Martha Gies's website, www.marthagies.com, and view the workshops and events she continues to offer writers within the US.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL IN THAILAND

Ralph Maughan – Seattle Chapter

In January, I travelled to Thailand to attend the Annual Maryknoll Retreat in Hua Hin, a coastal city a few hours south of Bangkok. During our volunteer work in Asia, my wife Kate and I had attended the retreat numerous times.

In addition to attending the retreat, I caught up with two longtime Maryknoll friends. Brother Tim Raible, who worked at the Seattle Maryknoll House for 11 years, is now the Maryknoll Society Pastoral Group Coordinator of South Asia. Brother John Beeching introduced Kate and me to volunteer work in Asia 21 years ago and has been in Bangkok since the early 90s working with Buddhist Monks and refugees. After a few days of visiting and reminiscing, we departed for the retreat in Hua Hin.

The official title of the program is the Hua Hin– Maryknoll Gathering. An annual event, the program features a retreat/lecture guest speaker, local-pastoral group meetings, and Charism/ Ministry meetings. The four expressions of Maryknoll—the Society (Fathers and Brothers), the Congregation (Sisters), the Lay Missioners, and the Affiliates are all invited and usually well represented.



Photo by Russ Brine

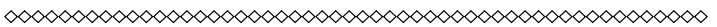
Cross at night at the Salesian Retreat House in Hua Hin, Thailand

Thirty-seven attendees from Nepal, Bangladesh, Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong, China, Timor Leste attended the conference. Sr. Kathleen Duffy, a Sister of St. Joseph of Boston with a PhD. in physics, spoke on Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ’s theology: “Teilhard’s Mysticism – The Circle of Presence, The Circle of Consistence, The Circle of Energy, The Circle of Spirit, The Circle of Person.”

The Hua Hin Gathering has been an annual event for Maryknoll in Southeast Asia for over 25 years and has gradually grown to include Maryknollers from other parts of the world. With topics ranging from forms of Christian prayer and of meditative prayer, to the spirituality of Buddhism, Islam, Animism, and

Eastern Mysticism, the program lasts 10 days. As well as offering real spiritual renewal, it is a time for sharing experiences in mission, catching up with old friends, and relaxing.

In 2021, the presenters will be Sr. Efu Nyaki, MM, and Fr. Dennis Moorman, MM, speaking about the need for different forms of inner healing from trauma, including spiritual and emotional healing. The retreat is open to all Affiliates whether they have worked in Asia or not. It is an uplifting and grand experience, and I shall attend again next year.



ON BEING A PARTNER

Kitty Schiltz – Seattle Chapter

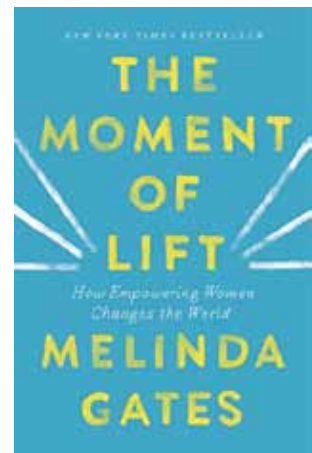
A Review of The Moment of Lift, By Melinda Gates

Reading Melinda Gates’ *The Moment of Lift* made me think it would be the perfect book for Maryknoll Affiliates thinking about Global Vision.

Melinda’s message: “The goal is for everyone to be connected. ... to belong. ... to be loved.”

I found myself reading about Melinda’s early life and comparing it to my own; we were both Catholic girls who grew up in a parochial school setting. The nuns who taught her in high school helped her develop her interest in computers and in daring something new.

Melinda talked about her marriage and how it developed into a partnership with both her and Bill working and planning together in life, work, and family. Melinda says it’s the only way to make a life between two partners work. She stresses the importance of being an adult and moving beyond rules.



Now she is busy as an equal partner in the foundation that works to educate women/girls, trying to enable them to be successful. The foundation works to educate women. Melinda has traveled to many parts of the world and has developed a vision of what people need by asking them first, without a preconceived remedy for their situations.

The book also reminded me of Paul Farmer’s experiences working with the poor in Haiti and elsewhere, as told by Tracy Kidder in *Mountains beyond Mountains*.



News from the Board

CONNECT DESPITE THE VIRUS

If your chapter hasn't yet used some of the new video conferencing tools to meet, try it—you'll like it!

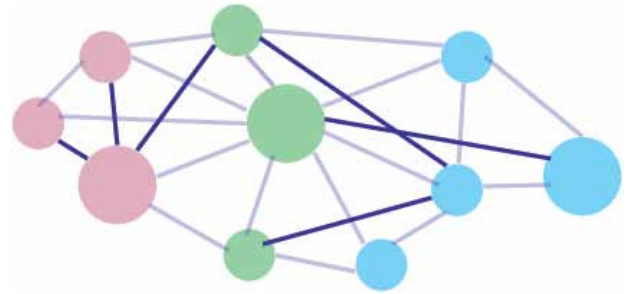
Board chair Rich Lessard stressed,

Right now, I can't emphasize enough for Chapter members to move beyond their fear or apprehension of technology to connect more with each other by Zoom or other web conferencing means. I'm hoping that Affiliates and their Chapters even try to find ways to connect via these means with other Affiliates worldwide.

The Affiliate Board and Regional Coordinators (RCs) recently brainstormed in a video conference about the opportunities provided by technology (*email, FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, phone call, text, WhatsApp, FreeConferenceCall, etc.*) during this time of isolation. Their ideas include:

- Chapters can meet virtually when meeting in person is difficult. It's easy to invite their Chapter companion, RC, or a Board member.
- Hold periodic topical/themed meetings by Zoom, a video conferencing tool available free at zoom.us. Missioners, including Affiliates, could share local experiences and messages of hope from their mission location.
- Affiliate Chapters could share how they are responding to the coronavirus.

- Conduct QUO VADIS, or a short version of QUO VADIS by video conference.
- Hold a virtual Regional meeting or a worldwide event. The technology accommodates break-out sessions by small groups.
- Meet virtually with a nearby Affiliate chapter—or a distant chapter.
- Visit the Virtual Chapel of the Lay Missioners (mklm.org/virtual-chapel/).
- Participate in a webinar or Facebook live conversation hosted by other Maryknoll entities.



Email and social media are also great ways to keep connected: Affiliates can use these tools to reach out to everyone in their chapter, especially while people are isolating and possibly ill. Many chapters copy their RC and/or Bob Short (and the NSFA!) on their email announcements and minutes.

Your turn: What success and problems have you had connecting? What else will you be doing to connect? Do you need assistance or how-tos? Tell the Board, your RC, and the NSFA your thoughts about using new tools to connect.



BORDER IMMERSION & ENCOUNTER WITH MARYKNOLL LAY MISSIONERS

**Texas-Mexico Border:
El Paso, TX / Juarez, Mexico**

Dates: November 9-15;
signup deadline – Aug. 9, 2020

Cost: \$750 (includes all meals, lodging, ground transportation). You will need to purchase round trip airfare to El Paso, Texas. We can pick you up at the airport.

What we will do:

- Visit Maryknoll Lay Missioners who are working with migrants at the border.
- Meet with migrants, health care workers, immigration lawyers, and Border Patrol to understand the issues facing migrants.
- Spend a 'work day' doing service with asylum



seekers, migrants, or refugees, in an emergency shelter or detention center, or through the education and social service programs offered by the El Paso Jesuit parish, El Sagrado Corazon.

- Review Catholic Social Teaching on migration.
- Discuss the push and pull factors causing migration from Central America and Mexico to the United States.
- Possibly visit organizations serving Ciudad Juarez residents across the US-Mexico border.
- Each evening we will reflect, pray, and enjoy community living.

For details, go to <https://mklm.org/trip-border/>.



What's Inside?

MAC Postponed 1

Missioners Respond to the Pandemic..... 1

Choosing How to Connect..... 2

Travel the world While Safe at Home? 2

12th Anniversary of Yucatán Chapter 4

Advising the Youth in Peru..... 5

Boston Retreat 2020: Who Do We Choose to Be? 6

Pope announces Laudato Si' Week 8

Distancing Sociably..... 8

Cultural Wisdom / A Note about Travel 9

Spiritual Renewal in Thailand / On Being a Partner 10

Connect Despite the Virus..... 11

Border Immersion with Maryknoll Lay Missioners..... 11



Find out what these young people are telling us on page 5.

