

**EZ MEETING: FAMILY – THE AFFILIATE COMMUNITY – THE KIN-DOM OF GOD**

**Begin** by reading “Family of God” (Maryknoll Book of Prayer, page 18):

*“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”—John 13:34-35*

*The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts. ... If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it.* —1 Corinthians 12:12, 26-27

Nothing can separate us from the love of God and nothing can separate us from each other. We are made in the image and likeness of God.

Prayer begins with the awesome recognition of our oneness with God. It continues with the realization of our unity with each other. We are all members of one family—the family of God. Let us Pray.

**Read** the articles on this page and the next in this NSFA, and consider these questions:

1. Compare your experience of family with that in the article from NTLH, “Family in Guatemala.”
2. How do the statements from the Greater Los Angeles and North Texas chapters relate to your Affiliate community?
3. How does your Affiliate community prefigure the Kin-dom of God?

**FAMILY IN GUATEMALA**

**T**wo simple questions were answered by family members from age three through adult of both genders, some members of Affiliates families: What is family for you? What do you most enjoy doing with your family? Their responses confirmed that love and care are essential elements for families of hope in a society.

Just as a plant needs love and care to develop in all its splendor, in families, love and care are the seeds necessary to the growth of a person capable of critical thinking, integrated, always seeking freedom for self and others, and in the future able to project the love and care they receive.

Here is a sampling of the responses\*:

**FOR ME, FAMILY IS ...**

3 to 12 years:

- The people who love, care for and hug you a lot.
- People who support me always no matter what happens
- A symbol of union and love. They are the ones who give you security and support, are with you in good times and in bad.

13 - 22 years:

- A gift of God, the people who love you unconditionally, support you and always seek the best.



- The nucleus of society. It is a fundamental element of the person, since we form our identity within the family.

23 and older:

- A pillar. It is the home base.
- It is part of what makes us who we are, those whom we can trust, who help us in good times and bad, always with us (even when we're away), the people whom we love most.

**WHAT I LIKE TO DO WITH MY FAMILY ...**

3 - 12 years:

- Put together puzzles, go to the park to play every day.
- The ultra-fun activities where everyone laughs.
- Go to parks, to the movies, to marathons together.

13 - 22 years:

- Vacations where we share experiences.
- Travel together to different parts of Guatemala.
- Search restaurants or cafes to try new foods and share the tastes of each.

23 and older:

- Watch movies and travel.
- When we are having lunch together or assembled in a room or doing any activity all together. The family love, a big hug.

\*For the unabridged original version of this article, dust off your Spanish skills and go to <http://maryknollaffiliates.org/news/downloads/no-tan-lejos-del-horizonte/53-no-tan-lejos-del-horizonte20-may-june-2016/file.html>, page 8.

**LA CHAPTER REFLECTS ON SURVEY TOPICS**

14 Members of Greater Los Angeles Chapter

**Hearing other Affiliate Chapters share...**

- Leads us to think outside the box.
- Shows that each Chapter is a unique personality.
- Highlights that each Chapter has liberty to focus more strongly on any one of the 4 Pillars; i.e., some are mission-sending (short term), others are local service groups, others stress prayer, support, or social groups.



**What is a Maryknoll Affiliate?**

Being an Affiliate member...

- Has opened my eyes to issues outside my normal experiences, such as human trafficking, non-violence, women’s rights, etc.
- Is living the Christian values

with other Affiliates.

- Continues the Maryknoll community, based on Maryknoll charism.
- Is a road to being a Maryknoll Missionary.
- Is thinking outside of ourselves—out of our comfort zone.
- We should feel as community, not individuals, and be community builders.
- Provides the place to remember our call on the journey.
- Through the four pillars we are 1) together 2) with the poor 3) in mission spirituality 4) with the tension between being and doing
- Is a commitment to living the 4 Pillars. It is not just about going to a meeting. It is who we are.

**General Observation...**

- I believe that our Chapter makes an effort to integrate the 4 Pillars, but we emphasize different ones at different meetings. I have grown greatly by being part of this Chapter.



**TALKING POINTS**

Ken Eppes –  
South Central Regional Coordinator

I got to thinking about talking points for the questions,



- Why I should be a Maryknoll Affiliate?
- Why I should form an Affiliate Chapter?”

I asked my Chapter in North Texas (Dallas/Fort Worth area), and they came up with the following talking points.

*Being a Maryknoll Affiliate:*

1. Gives you the opportunity to be part of Maryknoll, a worldwide American mission society.
2. Gives you the opportunity to be part of an international network of lay people who spread the Good News of God’s love in the way their unique circumstances permit.
3. Gives you the opportunity to be educated and spiritually formed in mission.
4. Gives you the opportunity to rub elbows with veteran, lifelong missionaries and draw on their wisdom.
5. Gives you the opportunity to meet regularly with like-minded people.
6. Gives you the opportunity to find support for your current involvements.
7. Gives you the opportunity to help others to answer their baptismal call to mission.
8. Gives you the opportunity to participate in a rich dialogue about mission.
9. Gives you the opportunity to engage in a continuous mission formation process.
10. Gives you the opportunity to grow in solidarity with the poor people of the world.

*Can you think of others?*



Close with the prayer, “God made us a family” (Maryknoll Book of Prayer, page 19):

*God made us a family  
We need one another  
We love one another  
We forgive one another  
We work together  
We play together*

*We worship together  
Together we use God’s word  
Together we grow in Christ  
Together we love all people  
Together we serve our God*

*Together we hope for Heaven  
These are our hopes and ideals.  
Help us to attain them, O God,  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

—Florence Sossong, Pittsburgh, PA

