



Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

July/August 2014

Volume 23 Number 4

THE NEW WAVE AT MAC 2014

Bob Short – Executive Coordinator

Over 130 Affiliates and other Maryknollers attended the Maryknoll Affiliates Conference—*Maryknoll Affiliates: The Third Wave Emerging into the Future*. Attendees came from Tanzania, Philippines, Haiti, France, Nicaragua, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia and the US. From all the feedback received, the Conference appears to have been a very positive experience. Several even spoke of it as opening up new directions for them—a fundamentally new, more expansive way of seeing things.

Each of us present at the Conference can probably recall a moment, perhaps several moments, when something or someone—a presentation, prayer reflection, conversation, evening social, small group discussion, walk through the grounds, etc.—struck a deep chord, and we were changed. Sometimes the simple act of coming together as a body of caring equals is in itself enough.

So much about Father John Sivalon's very powerful and evocative keynote presentation*, which attendees are still talking about, spoke of the cosmic predisposition to come together:

From particle physics, philosophy, social sciences but more importantly, through the struggles of everyday life, we know that the universe is made up of elements and forces that are intimately related to one another in a deep, mutual and intimate fashion. At the same time that we have come to appreciate the level of connectedness and oneness that exists among us and creation, we have also developed a deep appreciation for the diversity and complexity of our human family and creation as a whole. This growing understanding of diversity has nudged us towards an increasing gratefulness for its importance in defining us and understanding God.



*The full text of "A New Wave: The Maryknoll Affiliates and Our Sacred Pilgrimage" is posted on www.maryknollaffiliates.org.

Hope, the energy of seeking!

The Lure of Hope



The land of expectation lies neglected, worn and used... leaving only starlit dust sparkling against the surrounding backdrop of dense unknowing, just beyond.

Hope, the energy of seeking, lures us to set off on a sacred search along uneven roads in unfamiliar places to encounter that space of creative eagerness, which rises in the depth of all that members the earth and awaits the seed of tomorrow's fruit.

Each day, each now, whether in the fresh anticipation of dawn or in the weary silence of the midnight hour, we are stilled to hear life murmuring in each new place where, in the familiar rich earth of every place we've ever known, we recognize life's connections and hope blooms lovely in our midst.

Board Member Ann Hayden, MM, made this bookmark for the Maryknoll Affiliates gathered at MAC 2014.

CELEBRATING MAC 2014

With this issue, we send you the spirit of the Maryknoll Affiliate Conference (MAC 2014) at Stony Point and Maryknoll, NY. MAC 2014 set records: Affiliates from 35 chapters and 9 countries, about a quarter of them from Latin American chapters, attended. The enthusiastic Latin American Affiliates kept reminding us that mission looks different depending on where you're standing. They said one of the blessings of Maryknoll was the recognition of the indigenous peoples as partners in mission.

The Albany NY chapter did a wonderful job organizing the Conference around the four pillars of the Affiliate Movement—Spirituality, Community, Global Vision, and Action—applying the theme of Fr. John Sivalon's keynote talk, "The New Wave of Mission." (Affiliates are part of that new wave of mission!) Key sound bites from Sivalon that spoke to me were, "I came that all may be One, as We are One," and "The Big Lie of capitalism is that the human person is autonomous."

Bill Hall gathered photos and information from many chapters and incorporated them into an engaging DVD.



Attendees viewed the DVD presentation of chapters' various activities, and each person received a copy. We encourage local chapters to share the DVD at their meetings.

I urge you to read—and reread—Sr. Connie Posipsil's Sending Homily, page 11, to sense the depth and breadth of the joy and energy of the Conference. As always, please share your hopes, joys, and mission work with us at NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org.

Other exciting news: The Board has approved an update of the Maryknoll Affiliate web site. Our current website and communications will continue undisturbed until the new version is ready later this year. Affiliates will be notified by both email and in the NSFA when the change occurs.



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 call toll free 877-897-2386 or e-mail inquiry@maryknollaffiliates.org.

Co-editors: Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss & Paula Schaffner

Editorial Board: Kris Neufeld Penny Robinson

David Stocker

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.

Maryknoll Affiliates

PO Box 311 Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311

877-897-2386

nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org

**THE MAC 2014 PLANNING TEAM
OF THE ALBANY REGION CHAPTER**

Sends Our Thanks, Gratitude, and Sincere Appreciation to:

—all of our fellow Affiliates from across the United States and around the world who attended the Conference—for adding your uniqueness, your perspectives, your insights, your enthusiasm to each aspect of the activities;



—Bob Short and the members of the Affiliates Board, for your enthusiastic support and generous assistance throughout the entire planning process;

—The Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers and the Maryknoll Sisters—for

their hospitality, generosity, and contributions to the liturgical/prayer aspects of the program;

—Fr. Tom Hayes, Fr. Gerry Kelly, Sr. Ann Hayden, and Sr. Connie Pospisil—for the unique richness that each brought to our sharing of the Eucharistic celebrations;

—John Sivalon, Robert Ellsberg, Sam Stanton, and Sister Mary Ellen Kempken—for sharing their insights and ideas of mission to serve as springboards for our own discussion and contemplation of mission in our own lives;



—Charles Giglio and Kevin Orlando—for adding the gift of music, the universal language, to enrich our gatherings for prayer and for communal fun;



—Sr. Mary Ellen Kempken, Margarita Harman, Sr. Maureen Hanahoe, Victor Maqqe, Cecilia Quijano, Alberto Bailetti, Rosa Beatriz, Dan Driscoll, and John Martin, whose translating skills allowed us to share our ideas, wishes, and hopes with language as our medium, not as a barrier;



—Sam Stanton, Margo Cambier, the Maryknoll Lay Missioners—for their work and contribution to helping us to achieve one of the main goals of the Conference;

—Gerry Lee and the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns—for their participation and generous assistance;

—Paula Schaffner and Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss—for their support and guidance in helping to get the MAC 2014 news “out there” [in the NSFA];

—our fellow Affiliates members of the Albany Region Chapter—those who attended and worked so diligently at the Conference and those who worked so hard “behind the scenes” but were unable to attend;

—so many who gave so generously of their time, their talents, and even their treasure to make MAC 2014 a rewarding, pleasurable, worthwhile experience for all;

—so many who have made the past two-plus years of planning and working a wonderful, enriching, community-building experience for our group;

—Sr. Ellen McDonald for sharing her time and presence with us, for allowing us to give her a glimpse of the current state of the organization that she and Fr. Jim Madden created, of what has become of their shared dream.



We truly appreciate the work and support of all those who contributed to make MAC 2014 a successful Conference experience.

See you in 2017!!



A MISSION COMMUNITY RISES TO THE OCCASION

Santa Orlando – Albany Chapter

MAC 2014 is now an event of the past—what are its lasting effects? At times the planning committee all wondered how we ever said yes to this monumental task. The Board praised us for starting early and being organized, and it's good we were, as most of us were working up until the last week and, at times, to the last minutes. Of the committee of eight, three of us had attended the last MAC, so we had a loose idea of how things went and a wonderful sense of who the Affiliates really were. That was ultimately why we said yes and dragged others along. Our fellow committee members trusted us, trusted that this involvement would be special. We in turn trusted all the Affiliates, Sisters, Fathers, Brothers, and Lay Missioners to appreciate our efforts and forgive any shortcomings. We would do the best we could as people committed to the spirit of Maryknoll.

The spirit was surely present as we met monthly, leaving our egos at the door. We had many differences of opinions and some tense moments; luckily our sense of humor and our love and respect for each other allowed us to work together as a team. This was truly a team effort by the planning committee and the others in our chapter who worked with us in so many ways. I thank them all from the bottom of my heart.

On a personal note, Maryknoll is my home and the Affiliates are my family. I have finally found where I fit in, albeit it took me most of my life. For one who always has a question, pushes the envelope, and walks the edge of most of the rules, the Affiliate movement is where I fit in. My goal as coordinator of Prayer and Liturgy was for everyone to come away knowing that we all fit, we all belong. I hope that the diversity of the weekend's prayers conveyed that message.

As MAC 2014 approached, I just wanted to get to Stony Point, to be done with the planning and to trust that all would happen as planned. Yes, we had surprises and snafus; these rich moments will be part of what we remember. If nothing else, they served to keep us humble, realizing that no one of us is perfect. This "go with the flow" attitude, along with the "very social" socials, set the tone for a truly relaxed group of Affiliates who had a great time with one another.

Trying to involve as many people as I could from around the world in the prayer services allowed me to personally connect with people I might not have had a chance to meet. When my chapter members told me they had saved me a seat, I would explain I

wanted to sit with those I didn't know. Yes, it's all about the people. One memory that will stay with me from this conference is watching the English and Spanish readers for the prayer services work with each other to decide the cadence of the readings. The random pick of these readers became the catalyst for others to personally connect—great fun for me to watch.

I have come away with an even a greater commitment to Maryknoll. The entire planning committee did our best to be good hosts; we hope we made you feel welcome and that we conveyed the Maryknoll Spirit of hospitality. The emotional and logistical support during this process of Bob Short, who is functioning as the glue holding the Affiliates' *string, chewing gum and rubber bands* together; was truly a Godsend. Finally, I thank the entire Maryknoll family for their endorsement and support of the Affiliate movement. Until next time, *Namaste*.

MAC 2014—TRULY INTERNATIONAL

Ceci Quijano — Merida, Mexico Chapter

This conference was a beautiful experience for me because it was surprising to find many people from all over the States and also from Peru, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Philippines, Tanzania, besides we two from Mexico.

I enjoyed talking with different people from different chapters in the breaks, the dinner room, the social room and the discussion sessions. It was a pleasure for me to serve in the translators team because I could be close to the Latin-American assistants and listen to their points of view also.

I find in the Affiliates family an honest wish to get closer to each other and to go on in the mission of the Maryknoll family. Also it was a privilege to meet Jim Madden through Peruvian testimonies; although I didn't meet him in physical life, I feel I met him in this conference. Now, his vision and every chapter's testimonies inspire me to go on in my chapter and my community.



Visiting the grave of Fr. Jim Madden at Maryknoll.

THE PILLAR OF GLOBAL VISION – We learn about the richness of cultural and religious diversity and promote respect for our sisters and brothers around the world.

SYNERGY WITH MARYKNOLL LAY MISSIONERS

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss – Portland Chapter

At MAC 2014, Sam Stanton, Executive Director of the Maryknoll Lay Missioners (MKLM), thanked Affiliates for their involvement in mission and gave a quick visual tour of the Lay Missioners’ history and missions. He pointed out the synergy between Lay Missioners and Maryknoll Affiliates and invited Affiliates to participate in Lay Missioner-led immersion trips to Asia, Central and South America, and Africa. (Learn more at <http://www.mkml.org/take-a-trip/>.)

Small groups brainstormed and suggested ways that Affiliates and Lay Missioners could collaborate:

- Before, during, and after a missionary’s assignment, Affiliates could send, support, and receive Lay Missioners, providing emotional and financial support.
- Some chapters are prayer partners with missionaries who come from their area.
- Affiliates love it when missionaries can attend a chapter meeting—but Skype with those overseas would work, too.
- Affiliates can help recruit new missionaries. See the “Become a Missioner” tab on their website, www.mkml.org.
- Overseas, Lay Missioners could help form new Affiliate chapters.
- Affiliates often provide hospitality or help with church dates for visiting lay missionaries.

To share your ideas or questions about the Lay Missioners, see www.mkml.org, and the “Contact Us” page (<http://www.mkml.org/who-we-are/contact-us/>). You can also email info@mkml.org or Sam Stanton at ssanton@mkml.org.



VISIT CAMINANDO POR LA PAZ

Ron Covey – Houston Chapter

The photos above show some of the activity that takes place at Caminando Por La Paz. The Maryknoll Mission Immersion Retreat will visit us this fall! We have been advised that registration must be completed by mid-August. We hope some of our friends will be a part of this special opportunity.



MARYKNOLL MISSION IMMERSION RETREAT IN GUATEMALA

Matt Rousso – New Orleans Chapter

Dates: September 30th – October 7, 2014.

Cost: Only \$450 plus airfare

Only a few weeks left to sign up for this experience! Matt Rousso (New Orleans Mission Ed Director) and Fr. Gerry Kelly, MM (Houston Director) will lead this Immersion Program which promises to be very exciting. Take a look at the flyer, available at <http://notsofarfield.org/affiliate-events/>.

We can accommodate a maximum of only 10 people, so registration before August 15th is imperative. Use the registration form on the flyer, or contact Matt Rousso directly by email: [\[mklnola@yahoo.com\]](mailto:mklnola@yahoo.com) or by cell phone: 504-376-4142.



AN AFFILIATE’S IMMERSION EXPERIENCE

Joan Cruz – Long Island Chapter

I went on the Maryknoll Affiliate pilgrimage retreat to Esquipulas, Guatemala, in October 2013. This journey helped me to understand the meaning of mission spirituality and has helped me to live the meaning of being present to others. We prayed, formed community, and lived in a simple mission house and were present to the poor in our surroundings. The trip was well organized, well prepared, and I felt safe and welcome at all times. The friends I met while living in community will be my friends forever. I look forward to returning to Guatemala during the mission immersion retreat September 30 to October 7, 2014.

Thank you Matt. Gratefully, Joan





THE LORD SAID, "GO!"

This reflection was movingly presented by Noel Krebs (Goshen) and Mary Beth Buchner (Albany).

And the Lord said, "Go!"

and I said, "Who, me?"

and God said, "Yes you!"

and I said, "But I'm not ready yet and there is company coming, and I can't leave my kids. You know there's no one to take my place."

And God said, "You're stalling,"

Again the Lord said, "Go!"

and I said, "But I don't want to,"

And God said, "I didn't ask you if you wanted to,"

and I said, "Listen, I'm not the kind of person to get involved in controversy. Besides, my family won't like it, and what will the neighbors think!"

And God said, "Baloney!"

And yet a third time the Lord said, "Go!"

and I said, "Do I have to?"

and God said, "Do you love me?"

and I said, "Look, I'm scared... People are going to hate me... and cut me up into little pieces...I can't take it all by myself,"

And God said, "Where do you think I'll be?"

And the Lord said, "Go!"

and I sighed, "Here I am, send me!"

—Lois Hodrick

A MARYKNOLL BOOK OF POETRY: BEAUTY, TRUTH, AND GOODNESS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Editors: Michael Leach, Doris Goodnough,
and Helen Phillips

About a year ago Doris Goodnough sent a request to the NSFA for submissions to this book of poetry, which is now available. Order it (<http://www.orbisbooks.com/a-maryknoll-book-of-poetry.html>) and see whose poetry is included. As always, Orbis provides a generous discount to Affiliates.

OrbisBooks.com describes the book as inspired wisdom from writers on every continent to enrich people of every religious tradition. The collection includes poems by Carlo Carretto, Joan Chittister, Thich Nhat Hanh, Edwina Gateley, Ernesto Cardenal, Dorothee Soelle, Robert Morneau, David Steindl-Rast, Joyce Rupp, John Shea, Miriam Therese Winter, Daniel Berrigan and many others.

Michael Leach is author of I Like Being Catholic and Why Stay Catholic? Doris Goodnough is assistant to the publisher of Orbis Books. Helen Phillips, MM, is a Maryknoll Sister who has served in Peru, Bolivia, Nigeria, and Australia.



Photos in this issue courtesy of Kathie Gribble, Meredith Jean Heuer, Ron Covey, and the editors.

THE PILLAR OF SPIRITUALITY

We pray with and for those in mission and those in need, for our earth, and for the softening of our own hearts.



Reflecting on the conference theme that we are the “Third Wave” of mission, MAC 2014 attendees wrote their personal missions on the backs of “wave” cards and hung them in our communal prayer space.

MY MISSION IS...

Serving my fellow human beings.

Noticing those with no one to champion for them.

Where I am needed.

Working with special needs populations.

Serving with gratitude.

Never to judge.

Carrying the memory of Jim Madden.

Living my potential.

Being a peacemaker.

Helping all to see the connections among us.

Reaching out to Latino immigrants.

Working through interfaith groups.

Breaking down barriers between people.

Crossing boundaries with love & compassion.

Giving hope to those in despair.

Serving in my city.

Working for clean water, air, food, energy.

Nonviolence with love.

Bringing about the Kindom of God.

Working towards justice & peace.



REFLECTIONS ON THE THIRD WAVE CONFERENCE

Gerry Mullaney, Pam Cibik, and Kathy Ress
– NE Ohio Affiliate Chapter

The Northeast Ohio Chapter attended our first Maryknoll conference as a newly recognized Affiliate chapter. The new ways of thinking about mission resonate with our personal and professional lives—especially with the emphasis on relationship. Our chapter is largely comprised of mental health therapists, and so our lives are all about the healing power of close encounters and personal connections. Thinking of mission as essentially the encounter—the relationship—with the poor and marginalized is truly inspiring.

In addition to these ideas about mission, we came away from the conference with specific experiences of relationship and specific ideas for creating new relationships. We were able to re-connect with Lay Missioners we met on FAB trips to Cambodia and Bolivia. We continued our more recent conversations with our new Affiliate friends. We made new connections that are helping to generate ideas and plans for chapter activities in the months ahead. On our ride back to Ohio, as we are piecing together this writing, we are already talking about a trip to Haiti to do service. And we are considering the possibilities of connecting with an individual Lay Missioner over time in a longer-term relationship of emotional, spiritual, and financial support.

We see the notion of relationship as it applies to mission as essential in our efforts to walk with the poor and marginalized and in our effort to walk with one another as affiliates.

As we continued our reflections, we came to understand that it's all about relationships, that mission is an attitude, not fixing the other.



THE PILLAR OF COMMUNITY
We experience mission as connection with other humans, at times in far-off places, but first in our own communities.



EMAIL, PAPER, FACEBOOK, OR ???—YOU TELL US!



Many of you responded to our survey of Affiliate communication preferences on the last page of the May 2014 NSFA, as did the MAC conference attendees. If you haven't yet completed it, we want to hear from you! Please complete the survey which can be found at notsofarfield.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/p11-2014-affiliate-media-use.pdf.





THE PILLAR OF ACTION

We work for justice and peace in solidarity with the poor, oppressed, and excluded persons of the world.

THE NONVIOLENT LIFE

Review by Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss – Portland Chapter

To explore what nonviolence means, I recommend a slow, meditative reading of *The Nonviolent Life*, the new book by Fr. John Dear from Pace e Bene Press, while examining one’s heart and actions. I read his book quickly in preparation for my planned attendance at talks by John Dear, but I still found the book convincing and inspiring.

John Dear, with Pace e Bene, promotes Campaign Nonviolence (visit <http://paceebene.org>). His book and talks relate his personal experiences with peace activists such as the Berrigans and Desmond Tutu, peppered with inspiring quotes and exhortations to resist our culture of violence. He quoted Martin Luther King: “The choice is not violence or nonviolence, it is nonviolence or nonexistence.” Gandhi said, “Nonviolence means avoiding injury to anything on earth in thought, word, or deed.”



John Dear defines nonviolence as a vision of the heart in which we treat the whole human race as our sister and brother, one human family.

The three major sections of *The Nonviolent Life* are: a) nonviolence toward ourselves, b) nonviolence toward all others, and c) joining the global grassroots movement of nonviolence. His closing statement was, “There can be no cause for which we will support the killing of one person.”

John Dear explained that Campaign Nonviolence asks that we all take the Pledge of Nonviolence at their website and participate in nonviolent actions addressing war, nuclear weapons, poverty, or environmental destruction. Over a hundred organizations have endorsed the campaign and will coordinate nonviolent actions from September 21-27, 2014.

Gandhi asked, “What do you do in the face of injustice?” Affiliates, I invite you to read the book and to participate in Campaign Nonviolence by taking action, nonviolently, this coming September!



THE FLY ON THE WALL

Paula Schaffner – CA
Central Coast Chapter



For the last few years, as the spouse of a Board member, I have been asked to act as scribe so that the person writing the minutes could fully participate in the Maryknoll Affiliate Board meetings. Thus I've had the privilege of observing the meetings while not participating. Would you like to hear what the "fly on the wall" has learned at these meetings?

Besides getting to meet our founders—Fr. Jim Madden, MM, and Sr. Ellen McDonald, MM, I have witnessed a group of people, both Board members and Regional Coordinators (RCs), adding many hours of service to their already busy lives. These are not your typical nonprofit organization board members: no pay, no travel reimbursement. But they take seriously their commitment to be servants to the servants of the poor—you.

When most of the MAC 2014 attendees finished lunch on Sunday and, inspired but tired, started to make their way home, the Board, Executive Coordinator Bob Short, and the RCs gathered for a three-hour joint meeting.

After expressing thanks for Albany Chapter's job well done on MAC 2014, much of the discussion revolved around communication: What were the members telling the Board/RCs at MAC 2014? How can the Board encourage bringing home the stories we heard and inspiration we felt? They heard members state that they are happy to continue focusing on the Four Pillars and on the priorities established at MAC 2011: multiculturalism, youth, formation, and collaboration. And so they asked, how should we address these areas going forward?

Another communication concern was: how many people actually read the newsletters, visit the website, talk with their regional coordinators? How many members feel connected to their international movement? Is it time to conduct another census and update contact information? As a movement based on very individual, locally motivated chapters, should members see beyond their own chapters? Such questions don't have easy answers, but awareness of these issues infuses the Board's efforts to improve the website, to utilize the newsletters, and to support the RCs in their job of sharing information with their chapters.

The RCs presented issues they deal with: What can be done to foster current chapters and to encourage the development of new chapters? Related to that, how can the formation process be streamlined and made more relevant so that it encourages and welcomes, rather than burdening potential members? (A committee headed up by SE Regional Coordinator John Moritz is working on that task.)

The Affiliate leadership constantly works at being better connected and responsive to all members. The Board, Executive Coordinator, and Regional Coordinators ponder what they can do to enrich your Affiliate experience. I know they would be delighted to hear your feedback, both positive and negative, and your ideas. Also, please tell the Board if you or someone you know would like to serve as a Board member or Regional Coordinator. (Send your comments to inquiry@maryknollaffiliates.org.)

NOTE: The minutes for this meeting will be posted on the Maryknoll Affiliates website: MaryknollAffiliates.org. The Monday morning email will notify us when they have been posted.

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NEWS FROM THE KNOLL

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Opportunities in Cochabamba, Bolivia—
Language study: Steve Judd announced new plans to keep the Language Institute open in a restructured manner since an earlier announcement of indefinite closure. Watch for news at www.maryknollboliviavolunteers.org/ or Facebook for the Maryknoll Language Institute—*Centro Misionero Maryknoll en América Latina*.

Volunteering: To volunteer in Cochabamba, Bolivia, contact maryknollbolivia@gmail.com and see www.maryknollboliviavolunteers.org.

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Rev. Edward M. Wroblewski, MM, who passed away on April 16, 2014, was 88 years old and a Maryknoll father for 61 years.

Rev. Daniel D. Dolan, MM, passed on April 24, 2014 in Sleepy Hollow, New York. He was 92 years old and a Maryknoll priest for 59 years.

Rev. Richard R. Fries, MM, passed away on April 26, in Las Vegas, Nevada. He was 66 years old and a Maryknoll priest for 37 years.

Rev. Donald J. Vittengl, MM, was 83 years old and a Maryknoll priest for 57 years when he died on May 11, 2014 at Mission St. Teresa, Maryknoll, NY.



SENDING HOMILY FOR MAC 2014

Sr. Connie Posipsil, MM

*"Whoever eats my flesh
and drinks my blood
remains in me and I in
him or her."*

Today we often hear, "We become what we eat." Let's take this seriously. When we eat the body and drink the blood of Christ we become the hands, feet, eyes, and ears of Christ.

God's activity is present whenever humans are enticed into committing themselves to improve the world. We must exercise our own creativity if God is to achieve what God intends. Human activity is necessary for the building of the world. The will of God is not an antecedent plan to be discovered by us, but rather a plan to be co-created through the exercise of our own minds and hearts. In the best run, our thoughts are God's thoughts; our ways are God's ways.



We can do nothing without God. We cannot save ourselves, but God cannot save us without our own activity. Our unwillingness to cooperate with God is the meaning of sin. To be saved is to love God and we cannot love God unwillingly. Our willing cooperation is our salvation.

Vatican Council II transformed our understanding of church from that of a hierarchical institution into a people of God, in which all members are equally called to a life of holiness. That ecclesial vision highlights Baptismal Consecration and the significance of the lay vocation.

People who felt like undocumented persons in the patriarchal Catholic Church now demand the freedom to exercise the gifts God has given them, gifts for the good of the whole Christian Community. When we are conscious of our possession of the Word, we will not be intimidated by any system of power. We are called to be ministers of the Word.

The world is outgrowing the dualistic constructs of superior/inferior, win/lose, good/bad and domination/submission. Breaking through in their place are equality, communion, collaboration, synchronicity,

expansiveness, abundance, wholeness, mutuality. If our brains, as neuroscience suggest, take whatever we focus on as an invitation to make it happen, then the images and the visions we live with matter a great deal. So we need to actively engage our imaginations in shaping visions of the future.

The testimony you offer is a public word shouted in the strength of your witness and in the vitality of your ministry, for the times in which we live demand more than personal piety. It is a time of transition, a time for hope, for trust in things unseen, for planting seedlings that will grow to shape the justice and peace of future generations. The times we live in may indeed have greater need of imagination, risk, and daring than of patience.

Mother Mary Joseph's heart throbbed with a compassion rooted in the incarnation of love within us and among us. Hers was a wisdom which saw opportunity in every circumstance. She simply opened herself to her own need for communion with love, her need to live in Love's incarnate presence, which penetrates all of creation. In so doing, she made God's love visible—an incarnation that is alive now. May we all share with great simplicity this presence of Love Incarnate alive in us now, all of us together in Love's communion.

The renewal movement begun in Vatican II emphasized a return to the source of Christianity, specifically to Scripture and to early Church practice, focusing more on our responsibility to be the Body of Christ and to recapture the early tradition that Eucharist is something we are and do. The early Christians were totally committed to service. Moreover, Eucharistic and Christian living were inescapably connected with concern for the poor. The effective power and compassion of God has to be embodied and Eucharist proclaims that we will be this presence.



So today when receiving Communion, we respond with, "Amen" to "the Body of Christ," meaning, "Yes, we are the Body of Christ," here is the challenge: to live a genuine Christian Spirituality that will bring renewal to all of creation. At the end of the Liturgy, when we hear "Go in peace," let us go and make that Amen true.

We also heard Jesus say in the Gospel, "I am the Living Bread." ***So be this living bread. Go and make a difference in our World.***



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