



# Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

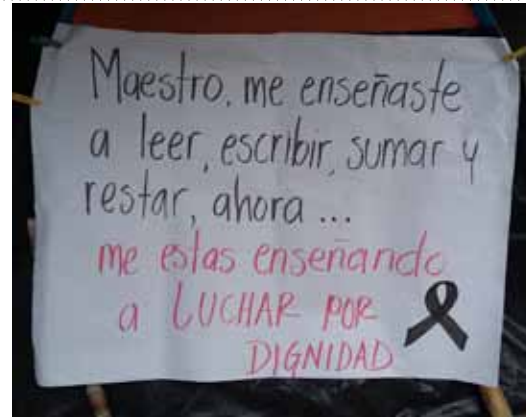
September/October 2016

Volume 25 Number 5

## OAXACAN COMMUNITY SPEAKS

Mary Gill and Pat Denevan

*Editor: After many years in mission in Oaxaca, Mexico, four former Maryknoll Lay Missioners, Mary Gill and Pat Denevan remain in Oaxaca, and Kathy and Phil Dahl-Bredine spend part of the year there. They all wrote in recent newsletters of the conflicts in Oaxaca. Mary and Pat provided this August 17<sup>th</sup> update.*



The message reads: "Teacher, you taught me to read, write, add and subtract; now...you are teaching me to struggle for dignity."

Ninety-four days have passed since the teachers in Oaxaca began large-scale protests against the federal government's "reform" of the educational system. The protesters in Nochixtlán (a city north of Oaxaca City) blocked a main highway to Oaxaca, which caused a huge traffic problem. The Federal Police came to forcibly remove the protesters, resulting in 11 persons being killed (in two locations). This action received international attention and strengthened the resolve of the protesters. The opposition to the Education Reform now includes not only the teachers

but the parents of the school children. In Nochixtlán, the local town authorities, along with the rest of the Mixteca Region, have joined the protests and have led marches to the Zócalo in Mexico City.

Protests are also happening in 22 other Mexican states.

Sit-in at the Zócalo in Mexico City.



The Federal government has finally agreed to a dialogue with the CNTE, the national organization of teachers, in an apparent concession to make some modifications to the Reform. So far the talks have been in secret, and the teachers are skeptical about the process. The blockade in Nochixtlán has been removed, but other blockades, marches, and protests continue throughout the country.

The teachers don't want to stop their demonstrations in order to keep the pressure on the government until they see some meaningful changes in the Reform. Several leaders have been released from prison. This social unrest has caused economic harm to mostly international businesses, such as Wal-Mart, which has threatened to leave Oaxaca... please do! Of course these blockades and marches are inconvenient, but people who are conscious of what is at stake deal with them in good humor. We need to keep in mind that the government is run behind the scenes by Carlos Salinas de Gotari, who trashed the Mexican economy in the 90s and is at it again.

While the overall situation is relatively quiet in Oaxaca today, the struggle continues. We don't know what will happen next, but the teachers are committed to nonviolent protests, and our prayer is that nonviolence will prevail and bloodshed will be avoided.

The Reform package of laws the Federal government passed include reforms not only to education, but also to the health care system, the electrical system, (CFE), the petroleum industry, (PEMEX), land rights, water rights, and taxation of small businesses. There is widespread opposition to these other "reforms" as well, since they were instituted without consultation of the people and will ultimately lead to privatization of these services and resources.




**COMMUNITY**

We are a brave and loving community! This issue of the NSFA provides reflections and news from several active Affiliate communities. The “center spread” on pages 6 and 7 includes an EZ Meeting that asks chapters, or individuals, to reflect on our Affiliate community and ponder its relationship to the Kin-dom of God.

Bob Short provides insights on the Affiliate mission of seeking/creating/forming global community, which can lead us to wholeness. The article on “Family,” from *No Tan Lejos del Horizonte*, the Spanish-speaking Affiliates’ newsletter, reminds us that the family provides us the grounding and formation that we need to be able to evolve into wholeness.

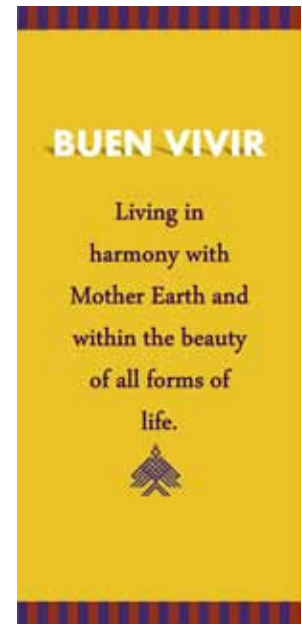
But there are impediments to wholeness. Demagogues, cults, and fearsome (and fearful) individuals may seek to maximize their benefits and protect themselves, disregarding the common good. The Affiliate community does not exclude the other but rather is supportive of the quest for knowledge and of care for our earth and its peoples, especially those less able to protect themselves.

Send your reflections and efforts for wholeness to [NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org](mailto:NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org) and we can share it with our global community. 

**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 [rshort@maryknollaffiliates.org](mailto:rshort@maryknollaffiliates.org).



**WILL YOUR CHAPTER BE REPRESENTED?**

Are you coming to MAC 2017 in Guatemala? Regional Coordinators (RCs) in the US have been asked to survey the chapters in their region to find out how many members plan to attend and how many might attend. If you plan to attend, contact your RC to add your name to the list.

Watch for details about travel grants if you’d like to attend but will need assistance. Perhaps chapters could share the cost for a member to represent them.

This preliminary information will help the Guatemala MAC 2017 Committee make MAC 2017 a great experience for all involved. 

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  
[NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org](mailto:NSFA@MaryknollAffiliates.org)

## GENUINE COMMUNITY

Bob Short – Executive Coordinator

**S**eeking *Global Community* is our Affiliate vision statement. “Seeking” might not be the perfect verb (up until a few years ago, it was “Creating,” but



that seemed a touch grandiose). Nevertheless, global community was and is at the heart of our intention.

So, we ask if the world today is more unified or less unified than it was yesterday? Is there a sense, if still faint, that we are a part of a wondrous whole, an integral, connected global community? The evidence for and against this supposition is abundant.

If, as a very small sampling, we chose to look at the present political drama in the US today, a bottle of Prozac couldn't cure the depression or make us conclude that we're moving towards global unity. One candidate boisterously promotes nationalism, isolationism, and individual ego (*I alone can fix this*), with little mention of positive connection to the world beyond US borders.

The other side speaks much more encouragingly about our alliances and our interdependence with other countries. Yet, several speakers at the DNC Convention spoke unapologetically of *American Exceptionalism*. As an Affiliate committed to Maryknoll's mission charism and having lived and worked for several years in Latin America, I found that reference troublesome. That is, I can love my country and the Constitution (as I do my own family) without repeatedly having to say that we are the best and most powerful country (family) in the world. Exceptionalism is just that—exclusionary and, I'm guessing, alienating to other countries. I don't see how it could promote a movement toward unified consciousness. In the end, the movement towards wholeness and global community requires a much deeper and more radical transformative consciousness.

The argument that the world is becoming more unified is also made by those who point to a new level of shared consciousness that has taken place via the World Wide Web and other digital technologies. Additionally, globalization, which Roland Robertson (*Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*) defined as, "...the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole" is an undeniable reality. So, a new sense of unity is emerging. However, this growing global consciousness has not been internalized and is unattached to a unifying Spirit. It has no soul. Or, as Iliia Delio OSF, expressed it in *Making All Things New: Catholicity, Cosmology, Consciousness*, (the book we are presently reading for the Affiliate Book Group), "...our emerging unity does not have a common story." (p. 107)

In the end, it is not a matter of getting clearer thinking on all this, because, despite Descartes's cognitive bias, heady, abstract thought inevitably cuts up the unified whole into a thousand pieces. Nor do we need yet another ideology. We've gone through plenty of those in our lifetime. In a small but important way, here is where the Affiliate vision, *Seeking Global Community*, can make a meaningful contribution, offering a heartfelt core to the emerging conscious unity. For it aligns with and is inspired by over 100 years of Maryknollers walking with and being present to peoples throughout the globe.

We've heard the axiom, "Give a man a fish and you'll feed him for a day; teach him how to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime." Maryknollers have gone beyond this, staying with the people to fish. In this way, mutual relationships are formed and genuine community can begin to form. And, while in those years the particular mission model was shaped by an older hierarchal cosmology, a heartfelt sense of Spirit and Love nevertheless infiltrated just about every aspect of the mission.



In the global community we seek (from wherever we find ourselves), Love and Spirit are the radically transformative elements and will always be a constitutive part of the common story and of a genuine global community.





## THE PROBLEMS WITH PALM OIL: HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN GUATEMALA AND HONDURAS

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss – Portland Chapter

**P**alm oil, an important export for Central and South American countries, is produced by large corporations. To increase production, the corporations buy land that has been privatized from indigenous communities. Increased production also requires massive amounts of water, for which dams and reservoirs must be built. These water projects destroy rivers and rob subsistence farms of irrigation water. Palm oil production practices have also contaminated water sources.

The conflicting interests of corporations, governments, indigenous people, and the very environment are being discussed in various forums, with Maryknollers at Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns (MOGC) and in Guatemala providing valuable insight into this issue.

In 2014, Chloe Schwabe, with contributions by Guatemalan Maryknoll Affiliates Rosa Beatriz Castañeda and Cecilia Garces, wrote in MOGC *NewsNotes* (<http://maryknollogc.org/article/guatemala-communities-attempt-block-dam>) that these projects follow the same historic patterns of community displacement, human rights abuses, and ecological devastation as large-scale dirty energy projects. MOGC has accompanied some people from Guatemala who work with the communities on lobby visits at the World Bank (IFC).

**Indigenous activists speak out.** In April, Chloe Schwabe of MOGC organized a briefing by three indigenous leaders from Honduras and Guatemala in Washington, DC: Tomas Gomez, coordinator of COPINH, Honduran Confederation of Indigenous People; Prof. Saul Paau Maaz, Guatemalan Mayan and Spiritual Guide; and Martin Fernandez of the Fraternal Black Organization of Honduras. The Guatemalans talked about palm oil plantations' connection to water projects in their communities, and the Hondurans told of state repression and assassinations of indigenous leaders who protest large dam projects that threaten indigenous territories.

Resistance to dam projects in Honduras and to palm oil production for biofuels in Guatemala is likely the reason for death threats and subsequent murders

of environmental activists, including Berta Caceres in Honduras (2016), and Rigoberto Lima Choc in Guatemala (2015). In 2013, another Guatemalan leader was killed and his son injured during a peaceful demonstration. The activists have asked for an independent investigation into these deaths.

Prof. Maaz told of a massive spill and contamination of La Pasión River in the northern region of Peten, Guatemala. An oxidation pond of the palm oil plantation containing high levels of malathion pesticide flowed into the river, killing fish and making the people's water source unusable. The activists said that the company initially accepted responsibility but has since withdrawn their admission. (See <http://www.humanosphere.org/environment/2016/01/palm-oil-production-tied-to-revolutionary-ruling-of-ecocide-in-guatemala/>. A YouTube search for "REPSA" shows many related videos, mostly in Spanish, on the catastrophe.) The activists are concerned that corporations act with impunity, wielding threats, causing pollution and even deaths.



**“What can we do?”** When asked that, the activists suggested that we encourage the Church to condemn the re-colonization of their ancestral lands. Tomas Gomez noted that Pope Francis has stated his support for indigenous rights, but the Church's hierarchy in Honduras supported the development programs and have even prohibited the local people from listening to the radio station of COPINH. He also asked that we stand in solidarity with the indigenous Central Americans and advocate against US policies that allow the people's impoverishment.

Besides being associated with the Central American land issues, palm oil has contributed to deforestation in other countries, and, being highly saturated, may even endanger our own health. As individuals, we could consider not buying products containing palm oil regardless of their source.





**MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES IN TANZANIA**

Bertha Haas –  
Returned Maryknoll  
Lay Missioner, Portland  
Chapter

Costansia Mbgoma  
hosted a gathering of  
the Maryknoll Affiliates of  
Mwanza, Tanzania at her

home this July. US Affiliates may remember Costansia from the conferences she has attended and her time in San Francisco.

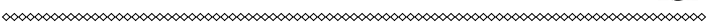
Six Mwanza Affiliates shared scripture reflections, food, and fellowship with guests Maryknoll Sister Celeste, Portland Affiliate Bertha Haas, and a Maryknoll Sisters candidate. Many of the Mwanza Affiliates are former students of the Maryknoll Sisters at Rosary College. They stay connected to the Sisters and their fellow students as a means of retaining their Maryknoll ideals and values in a society that often doesn't share them. They attract many younger members, including men, who are attracted by Maryknoll spirituality and are called to see social needs and respond.

Bertha presented the Affiliates pens and rose lapel pins from the Portland Affiliates as symbols of our unity and good wishes. Some of the Portland Affiliates also met the Mwanza Affiliates when they visited the Huruma School, which Bertha founded in Mwanza in 2004. In exchange, the Mwanza Affiliates gifted Portland Affiliates with coin purses sewn by women in their micro finance groups. A couple of the Mwanza Affiliates expressed an interest in taking leadership roles at the Huruma School.



One of the charter members of the Mwanza Affiliates, Agnes Medard, generously shared with Bertha the importance of Affiliate membership in her life. Mrs. Medard is the Head Mistress of St Joseph Seminary for Girls in Mwanza. The Seminary was founded in 1994 by Archbishop Mayala to train lay-women leaders for the Church, women who will spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. (See also NSFA Jan/ Feb 2015) Medard has been Head Mistress since its founding. Forms 1-4 are the equivalent of our secondary school. Students who complete Forms 5-6 enter university as sophomores.

Medard was the emcee for the 2012 Maryknoll Sisters' Anniversary Celebration in Mwanza, an event attended by more than 200 friends and supporters. She says she maintains her membership in the Affiliates because it keeps her involved with others who share the Maryknoll charism of loving, caring service, and prayer. To stay young and engaged, she joins her former classmates in singing and reminiscing. Imbuing her students with a commitment to the dignity of each person is a continuous challenge in her work. To this end she encourages students to get involved with students at Huruma School for the Disabled.



**KOREAN AFFILIATES MEET**

Lydia Kim – Korean Chapter Secretary  
Translated by Russ Feldmeier, MM –  
MA Board Member

Ten members of the Korean Chapter gathered at the Maryknoll Sisters' house in Seoul on June 11, 2016.

We began with a sharing on the Sunday readings for that week, as well as on our activities for the past month. There are many tragic issues in society these days, which demonstrate a lack of concern for others and a marginalization of many people. In particular, we spoke about criticism and indifference towards others, the inability in daily life to overcome prejudices, and the frustration that in such circumstances we are often unable to find the true way to respond. In addition, we reflected upon the reality of many women who suffer from social structures that continue to discriminate against women. The sharing was an opportunity to look at how we as believers can respond to the issues we are faced with.

We usually meet monthly, but due to summer vacations, our next meeting was on August 27, 2016 when we gathered for a day-long retreat.



Photo courtesy of Russ Feldmeier, MM

Visitor Russ Feldmeier, MM, is surrounded by the Korea Chapter he fostered while serving there.



**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



**EMPHASIS ON ACTION**

A Chapter Profile

While California Central Coast (CCC) Affiliates share a potluck meal, they talk of their passions and missions. Affiliate Joan Bogle worked with the Alzheimer Association and helped lobby for successful legislation that secured funding for related programs. By facilitating a small Alzheimer support group, she repaid the support she received when her husband was suffering with Alzheimers and she was his sole caregiver. Now she looks for ways to involve the Senior Adult Ministry of her parish in mission.

Joyce Miller's passion is the Montessori preschool she and her husband founded 35 years ago. She was happy to hear that the Maryknoll Sisters in Tanzania were involved in a Montessori school. Over the years she and her husband have also helped raise thousands of dollars for Alpha, a right-to-life organization that counsels pregnant women and supports mothers.

David and Paula Schaffner count themselves lucky to have volunteered in Namibia, Thailand, and Haiti with both Maryknoll and other organizations.

Several members who are not able to travel overseas are involved in local efforts. Joan McKenna, a social worker who works through a hospital, often assists the homeless. On occasion, she enlists help from the chapter to volunteer at events, such as a golfing fundraiser for a local homeless coalition.



Tricia Witt and Paula Schaffner enjoy helping at a golf event.

The Central Coast Chapter acts as the yeast in their parish working for justice. For example, the CCC provided the inspiration and organization for their parish to help build a Habitat for Humanity house.

Meetings often include visitors: Affiliates from other Chapters, A Maryknoll priest, Maryknoll Lay Missioners Kathy Bond and Flavio Rocha from Brazil, and other mission volunteers.

One Affiliate said she is usually tired from work and typically won't go to evening meetings, but she always looks forward to the Maryknoll Affiliate gatherings.



**FOSNA/MARYKNOLL LINKS**

Manny Hotchkiss – Portland Chapter

At a Friends of Sabeel (FOSNA.org) Leadership Conference this July in Portland, Oregon, we were happy to see that Sabeel, the voice of the Palestinian Christians, intersects with Maryknoll. Naim Ateek, an Episcopal priest from Nazareth, founded the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem over 25 years ago. Orbis has published several of his books: *Faith and the Intifada: Palestinian Christian Voices* was published in 1992; *Justice and Only Justice*, and *A Palestinian Christian Cry For Reconciliation* discuss liberation theology as it pertains to Israel's occupation of Palestine.

Photo by Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss



Before Naim Ateek's talk (l to r): Joan McClellan (Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation), Rev. Canon Richard K. Toll, Rev. Naim Ateek, and Manny Hotchkiss.

Naim Ateek, one of the FOSNA conference speakers, emphasized four points of liberation theology:

1. Stand for truth and justice without violence. Resist evil without doing evil.
2. Rise above the ways of the world without abandoning your involvement and commitment to the poor and oppressed.
3. Seek the humanity of the oppressor without appeasement or collaboration.
4. Stay true to your faith, loving and worshiping without becoming rigid and closed.

Omar Haramy, administrator of Sabeel in Jerusalem, said South American liberation theologian Gustavo Gutierrez may participate in a future Sabeel conference.

The Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns' *Middle East Notes* frequently mention Sabeel, Naim Ateek, Palestinian liberation theology, and BDS. The whole June 25, 2015 issue (<http://maryknollogc.org/article/middle-east-notes-june-25-2015>) addressed BDS, the worldwide movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanction against entities that profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Have you travelled to Israel/Palestine recently, or been involved in Sabeel or BDS? Please send your reflections to the NSFA.





## BOOK GROUP SUGGESTIONS

Participants in the first **Maryknoll Affiliate Book Group** session this summer replied to a survey sent by Executive Coordinator Bob Short, giving feedback about their positive experiences and making some suggestions. Some participants would prefer being in a smaller group or meeting at another time. Smaller groups could allow more time choices.

Gabriella Maertens wrote: "I wondered how a book club by phone could work. I agreed before I received the book and then I wondered how we could discuss such a difficult book—*Making All Things New*. But I have been really happy with the group discussions that have taken place and impressed with the insights of our group. I look forward to 'seeing' everyone each week."

During the 10 weeks or so of the discussions, some groups posted their reflections on Facebook, including, "We continue to be challenged by all the new ideas and ways of thinking of the world, God, and our place in the universe. Even if we did not follow all the science behind Delio's thinking, the chapter gave us a greater appreciation of how deeply interrelated, entangled, and interdependent all of creation is," and "...we talked about wholeness as a community. We decided the future depends on our willingness to be open and to listen. Someone asked how incorporating these new thoughts can affect us directly where we are; can we be more aware of our surroundings and let this awareness influence how we respond to our world?"

Participants enjoyed sharing thoughts and suggestions with each other. Kathy Morefield posted on Facebook: "Along with Delio's book, I am reading *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics* by the Italian quantum physicist Carlo Rovelli. In the Preface of his book, Rovelli writes, 'These lessons were written for those who know little or nothing about modern science...' The book is only 78 pages and is beautifully, lyrically written."

Most participants said they want to continue in the next book group but might need to switch to a more convenient time. Many suggested books at Orbis for the next round by authors such as Richard Rohr, Thomas Berry, Diarmuid O'Murchu, Elizabeth Johnson, or Christiana Peppard.



The start date for the next Affiliate Book Group has not been set, but January is a possibility, since fall and holiday times are often busy. All Affiliates are invited to send their

suggestions to Bob or the NSFA for the next book, whether a book they'd like to discuss, or one they've read and recommend. Orbis books are preferred since Affiliates enjoy a large discount from Orbis. (Editor: The NSFA is always happy to receive book reviews from Affiliates.) Please contact Bob Short ([rshort@maryknollaffiliates.org](mailto:rshort@maryknollaffiliates.org)) or the NSFA ([nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org](mailto:nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org)) if you're interested in participating in the next Book Group or have a book suggestion.



An African music group serenades Bertha Haas, right.

## WELCOME HOME PARTY FOR BERTHA!

As a Maryknoll Lay Missioner, Bertha Haas founded the Huruma School for children with disabilities in Mwanza, Tanzania in 2004. Now, in her retirement, she spends about a month each year at the school, reconnecting with the teachers and children, working with the Tanzanian Board that oversees the school, seeing the progress, and dreaming with them about the future.

To welcome Bertha home, the Portland Maryknoll Affiliate Chapter hosted a fund-raiser party complete with an African music group. Supporting the Huruma School is an important outreach for the chapter.



## OPTION FOR THE POOR IN COUNTY JAILS?

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss – Portland Chapter

Stored Value Cards, Inc., doing business as Numi Financial, targets county jails. In an August 2016 article, Arun Gupta noted that Numi contracts with counties to provide debit cards to return inmates' money upon their release. (<https://www.thenation.com/article/the-financial-firm-that-cornered-the-market-on-jails/>)



In 2013, over 11 million people were released from county jails, making it a preferred market. The problem is that over 80 percent of the Numi debit cards end up paying onerous fees. The article states, “The terms for the card used in Multnomah County (Oregon) lists 11 possible fees—the \$5.95 monthly fee, a \$2.95 fee for ATM withdrawals, \$0.95 for a declined transaction, \$1 to check the balance, and \$9.95 to have the balance refunded by check.”

An estimated 30 percent of the debit cards holding released prisoners' own money are never used and are completely consumed by the fees. Inmates who may be deported by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) suffer additional problems with the cards due to English-only written directions and customer service and higher international fees. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and Electronic Funds Transfer Act do not cover this type of cards.

Numi Financial and similar companies should also be targeted by campaigns against for-profit prisons and the exploitive jail telephone systems.

***Who gets preferential  
treatment in your  
county?***



## YEAR OF MERCY – THE HOMELESS

Don Foran – Friend of the Affiliates

Ten men clamber out of the creaking van,  
Their sweaty bodies meeting a kiss  
Of cool night air.  
They drift, silently, sullenly  
Toward the darkened church.  
Mattresses lie, two or three to a room,  
Along walls decorated with children's  
Drawings and almost casual crucifixions.  
Carl, Eddie, Jake and the others  
Throw their worn packs and bags  
Onto the makeshift beds, and John,  
It's always John, is first to ask  
If he can have his sack lunch now,  
Not in the morning as we had planned.  
“Sure,” I say, almost as anxious as he  
To assuage this remediable hunger.  
Several echo John, and soon all  
Are feasting on pb and j; apples, celery,  
And other healthy fare remains on the table,  
But they're happier now, even communicative.  
One thanks me for setting a new pair  
of white socks  
On each mattress. Another offers a juice cup  
To a friend. “Lights out!” Rick calls at ten,  
And no one argues, no one hesitates. Sleep  
Knits once more the raveled sleeve of care,  
Obliterates the hurt, soothes  
the jangled nerves.  
Tomorrow will be another day,  
Another cheerless day embroidered  
With small triumphs, fragile dreams.

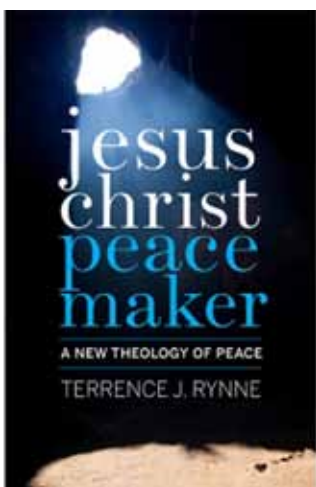
Note: “The Homeless” first appeared in *Beyond Parallax*, Centralia College (2003). Reprinted with permission.

**A THEOLOGY OF PEACE**

*A Review of: Jesus Christ Peacemaker, A New Theology of Peace by Terrence J. Rynne, Orbis*

Every page of this book contains inspiring revelations about the Christian call to peace and nonviolence. The book's key points are:

- the new theology of peace,
- the explanation of the historical development of the Church's attitudes towards violence and militarism,
- the hope that Rynne sees in the Church's 20th century statements and letters, such as Pacem in Terris, Gaudium et Spes, and The Challenge of Peace, that strongly support nuclear disarmament and restate the early Church's rejection of violence.



Rynne describes a theology based on the life and teachings of Jesus, one that puts the just war theory in its appropriate subordinate place. "Just war theorists too often engage when war is looming...blissfully unaware of the larger and broader task to cultivate a peaceful world." Rynne quotes Pope Benedict XVI, who described nonviolence for Christians as "not a mere tactical behavior but a

person's way of being ... [a person] who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love or truth alone."

The book quotes ancient and modern writers and has an extensive bibliography and index. *Jesus Christ Peacemaker* would be ideal for a book club.



**CAMPAIGN NONVIOLENCE – TAKE ACTION!**

*What do Laudato Si, BDS, and No to Gun Violence* have in common? They are the nonviolent themes of some **Campaign Nonviolence** actions, Sept. 18 to 25, 2016. What issues in your community could you or your chapter address during the campaign? See hundreds of planned actions at <http://www.paceebene.org/programs/campaign-nonviolence/campaign-nonviolence-week-of-actions/>

Please write to [nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org](mailto:nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org) and tell the Affiliates about the actions that take place in your community.



**MARYKNOLL MISSION INSTITUTE 2016**

*The Mission Institute offers six-day programs (Sunday-Friday) May-October, 2016. Upcoming programs:*

Sept. 25-30 in Monrovia, CA and Oct. 3-6 in Los Altos, CA:

**Margaret Silf, MA**  
Living God's Dream

Online registration is available, or write for forms: Maryknoll Mission Institute, Maryknoll Sisters P.O Box 311, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311 Tel: 914-941-7575 @ 5671 E-mail: [missinst@mksisters.org](mailto:missinst@mksisters.org)

Website: <https://maryknollsisters.org/maryknoll-mission-institute-2/>



**BOLDLY LIVING THE GOSPEL ON NONVIOLENCE AND JUST PEACE!**

*Saturday, September 24, 2016  
10AM-12:45PM  
Burien, WA*

**The major presenter, Marie Dennis**, Co-President of Pax Christi International, is a former director of the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns. She helped to organize the recent Vatican Conference on Nonviolence and Peacemaking.

**Learn about:**

- Gospel teaching on peacemaking and nonviolence
- The recent Vatican Conference on Just Peace
- Our personal and communal call for peace
- Practical ways to engage in nonviolence and peacemaking in our area.

**Sponsors** include *JustFaith* local leadership, Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center ([ipjc.org](http://ipjc.org)), local Pax Christi groups, and the Missions Office of the Archdiocese of Seattle.



**BOARD MEETS IN OCTOBER**

What issues should the Maryknoll Affiliate Board discuss? What actions do you recommend? Your input is welcome and encouraged! Ideas sent to [nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org](mailto:nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org) will be forwarded.



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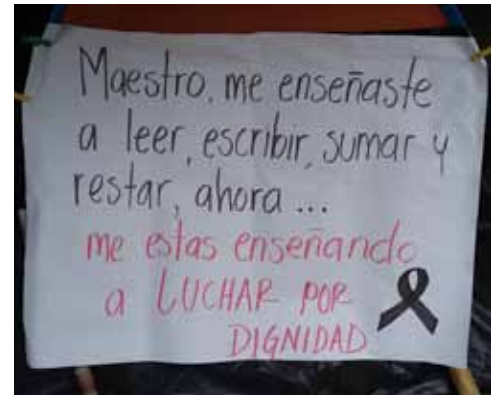
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