



Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

March/April 2012

Volume 21 Number 2

OUR MARYKNOLL BROTHERS

They may be religious Brothers in Maryknoll, but as you can read in this edition of *Not So Far Afield*, these men who have served in mission and are often a humble presence in the Maryknoll family are really like siblings to so many of us. They have often welcomed us to serve with them in mission, whether that be for a few weeks or a few months, and welcomed us to their "Maryknoll homes" in New York, Seattle and elsewhere. In turn, we have been happy to open our Maryknoll Affiliate Chapters to these same brothers. All we can do, as has been expressed in all these articles, is be grateful for this connection and friendship.

On another note, you may have noticed that there was no *Not So Far Afield* for January and February. Perhaps because of the holidays, we did not have enough articles for a full issue. We are including here the articles we did receive that touched on the theme "Option for the Poor." So, consider this a combined issue for the start of 2012.



Sharing a meal with Brothers Mark Gruenke and Loren Beaudry

MY BROTHERS

Story and Photo by Virginia Yorio - New York City Subway

One week before I left for my first assignment as a short-term missionary in Africa, my brother, Victor, died suddenly. I flew to Florida for the funeral and returned to NYC just in time to board a plane for Namibia.

When I landed in Windhoek, Namibia's capitol, Maryknoll Brothers Mark Gruenke and Loren Beaudry were there to meet me. God had given me two new brothers. This was in 2008. They have been brothers to me in every sense of the word.

I worked closely with Mark setting up the Business Skills Course at Nyangana, and I taught there during the spring for 3 years. Mark had already built a successful computer learning center and now the business course along with a course in English gives the students a chance to get a job. When speaking about the Maryknoll Affiliate volunteers, Mark says: "Before you came, they (the students) had no employable skills; after you left, they are able to get a job and earn money to raise their families. Just a couple of months ago the government decided to hire secretaries for all of the rural schools in our area. These are very good, well paid jobs! But only those who have computer literacy and office skills training could apply. So, it is our alumni who qualify!"

We all shared meals and conversations together and prayed together; it is during this time that most of the bonding took place. "We were a support group for one another and we considered each other as brothers and sisters," says Loren. I remember the day, shortly after my arrival, that Loren presented me with a tent that he had carried to Namibia from Ossining for me to use. "But Loren, I don't do camping. I'm from New York City," I squealed. Loren asked me to just think about it. I did some thinking. How bad could it be? I went camping the following weekend with Mark and Loren. This New York City greenhorn loved it, and I went with them every weekend thereafter. Sometimes, Fr. Charles Mikaya, our pastor, joined us. Fr. Charles camps frequently in the bush because it is the only way to visit the 46 communities that are part of his parish, Sacred Heart.

Mark and Loren were the first Maryknoll Brothers that I met. Later I met Brother Jude Conniff who visited with Mark in New York City. Later Jude became the Co-Director at Maryknoll Society House in New York. Sadly, he died in September, 2011. I also had the pleasure of going on a tour at Maryknoll in Ossining with Brother John Blazo. The Fathers, Brothers and Sisters of Maryknoll have enriched my life beyond my wildest dreams.

One of my Brothers sums it up best: "Our relationship is all part of a much bigger picture. It includes the students who come to us in order to support their families. Our common love and dedication unites us—a larger community, all of us dedicated in service."

**WANTED: YOU AND YOUR CHAPTER(S)
POSITION:
MAC 2014 COORDINATOR**

Description of Position: Satisfying, Requiring Creativity, a Lot of Work, Frustrating, Humbling, Contributing to the Movement, Spirituality Enhancing, Sustenance Providing, and very Fulfilling.



The Affiliate Board at their Fall 2011 meeting set the date for the next Maryknoll Affiliate International Conference for 2014. This decision was made considering the input from MAC 2011 participants. The venue will be in proximity to Maryknoll so that the traditional "Day at Maryknoll" is possible along with providing an opportunity for Maryknollers to attend and contribute to the richness of these Conferences.

AFFILIATE FUNDING THERMOMETER SHOWS A WARMING TREND

Dave Schaffner –Maryknoll Affiliate Board

It may still be winter out there, but there is a warming trend in Affiliate Finances. Three months into this year's funding cycle over \$8,000 has been raised, which is about 30% of our \$24,500 goal. First, thank you to all of you who have already contributed and for those who have tucked away the appeal information in a secure place-please don't forget where that place is!



You may remember that last year we met our appeal goal of \$18,500, and reaching that goal was mainly made possible by more of us "Stepping up to the Plate." This year we are looking for even greater Affiliate participation. To put it in perspective, if 50% of Affiliates are active contributors our financial goals should be met. It will be great to see the thermometer signaling an early spring and to have reached goal and be able to enjoy summer.

If you don't remember the secure place where you tucked away the appeal letter, you can download the [appeal letter](#) and the [reply form](#) from our website.

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 in more than 30 countries.

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.

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|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Jeanette Birondo-Goddard | Nick Petraglia |
| Lee Fermin | Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss |
| Fred Goddard | Penny Robinson |
| Kris Neufeld | Paula Schaffner |

We welcome submission of articles by Maryknoll Affiliates and Maryknoll Missioners and suggestions for articles. Articles are published in a timely manner as possible and in conjunction with appropriate themes as is applicable. All submissions are subject to editing.

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

Please send any letters to the editor, articles, photos or inquiries to the address below. You may also contact us if you no longer wish to receive Affiliate mailings; prefer to receive them by e-mail or read them on the web; or if you have changed your address.

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Photo: Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers



Brother John Blazo MM carrying a country flag at the Society Centennial Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral

GOD IS GRACIOUS

Ronni Gilligan and Agnes Walsh – Long Island

Blessed is the person who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord. Jeremiah 17:7

God is Gracious"—that is what "John " means in books of given names.

John Blazo is certainly gracious, but in a way he is also like a lion of God. He seems to have a well-honed ability to seek out the "wounded", the "weakest", the person needing company at a given moment. Maybe because of his early encounter with polio and its subsequent effects, he is very open to those in distress—the ones that lions usually go after.

John is a missionary. He is always on the lookout as to where he can bring the "good news." Although he did serve several years in Guatemala, many know him in his role of mission education promoter for Maryknoll. Traveling from school to school doing mission presentations, speaking at parishes, and visiting Affiliate groups, he spreads the spoken and written word. No one gets away from Brother Blazo without an assortment of magazines, calendars, pamphlets etc that are ever-present in his car.

We value John's participation in the Long Island Affiliate Chapter. He is gracious, always having time to sit and chat. His knowledge of Maryknoll history is deep and he is actively passing the tradition and stories down to next generations of Maryknollers in "broad strokes."

Among the many ways he goes about "helping God's people" (in his words) is by meeting groups and graciously giving them tours through The Society Center and the Museum of Living Mission, by visiting the infirm at St. Teresa's and by going to visit inmates at Sing Sing prison in Ossining. He utilizes the Internet to connect people and lift their spirits by sending jokes, awe-inspiring photos and reflections. "The Blazo" is also involved in outreach to Spanish-speaking groups. He is a real communicator—and he listens!! As he

has said, "Money is needed for Mission work but we also need to be open and learn from the people with whom we work about God's love and concern." He does!! He is a gracious lion.

Thank you Brother John Blazo

REACHING OUT TO EVERYONE

Ralph and Kate Maughn – Seattle

We first met **Brother Tim Raible** at the Seattle Maryknoll House in 1996. He had just returned from several years in Africa. Over the next 12 years we worked and spent time with Brother Tim as he established the Seattle House as one of the premier Maryknoll Mission Houses.

His development work encompassed the entire Northwest with numerous mission dates and presentations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska. One would be hard pressed to find a Diocese, Convent or Monastery in the Northwest that did not know and admire Brother Tim. His outreach to everyone and every organization was remarkable.

During his years in Seattle we became very close friends and had the privilege of meeting and becoming friends with his family in including his mother, sisters and extended family

Outside of Maryknoll events we have traveled and vacationed together exploring many sites and places in the Northwest. Brother Tim exemplifies all that is good about the religious life. He is a true and trusted friend to many. When he left Seattle to open a new mission house in Washington, DC, we were sad to see him leave but knew that he would succeed as always in his new assignment. Brother Tim is one of our most cherished friends.



Photo: Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers Vocations

Brother Tim in Kenya

REVIVING, REFRESHING AND RESTORING

Ronni Gilligan and Agnes Walsh – Long Island

We will not withdraw from you; revive us and we will call on your name. Lord of hosts, restore us; let your face shine upon us that we may be saved (Ps 80:19-20).

Brother John Beeching revives, refreshes and restores. Through his many missions and ministries, he makes it possible for the face of the Lord to shine on a host of people. John is always "on the run," much like a buzzing bee and just as noticeable! Bursting with ideas, energy, kindness and genuine love, he bustles from wat to wat (Buddhist temples in Thailand). He has organized a swarm of volunteers to teach English to saffron-clad monks, and he works among the homeless who seek shelter at the temples. He visits prisons that hold many refugees, most guilty only of seeking safe haven. He brings them news and things they need or want, like blankets and paper, and helps them with visa and immigration issues. Hospitals, where sometimes the only care available is provided by visitors, are regularly on his schedule.

Once, Brother John had been working with an amputee and had somehow found a prosthesis for him. Long afterwards, the man complained often about a part being loose, though he didn't go to John to fix it. However, one night at three in the morning the man called a sleeping John, very upset and blathering that "it's coming out... it's coming out!" Tired, but ever patient, John told him to just calm down, keep it in, and he would solve the problem first thing the next morning at the Maryknoll House. The next morning there was a great surprise. Indeed the man showed up—but it was more clear what the man was talking about. He had with him the young woman he had found on the street giving BIRTH!! All three showed up with the man saying, "I couldn't keep it in." Unflappable Beeching took right over, caring and providing for the newborn and his mother. It was like a mini Christmas... but, just a regular day for Brother John Beeching. You might say he "lives in Bethlehem."

Indeed, his home now is in Thailand, though previously he had served in Central America and the Middle East. However he is also very busy in Myanmar (Burma) where he goes, "periodically to help in the pre-major seminary with English classes and other projects in the northern Diocese of Myitkyina." Although Brother John is now retired, no one would notice. He continues to buzz among the crowds bringing sawadee (Thai hello and goodbye) and smiles.

Although his life seems a blur of efficient actions, he is a man of deep spiritual grounding and prayer life that reflects the Buddhist "now moment" and the flowing of the Holy Spirit. He is sought after to assist in planning liturgies, conferences and interfaith events worldwide. He has the gift of making everyone feel "welcome" and of giving them a place at the table. Like the busy bee, John is a cross-pollinator, an evangelist, a worker who goes about the world but always comes

* Maryknoll, March - April 2012

home to make the whole community richer.

John Beeching is a lover of life, of parties, of community, of theatre, music, art, and the God that embodies creativity. His life reflects the psalm's urging to "sing for joy to God our strength. Begin the music, strike the tambourine, play the melodious harp and lyre" (Ps 81). He is a marvelous storyteller and has shared many tales with Maryknoll Magazine readers.

To have met and "worked with" Brother Beeching is to have been given a gift—to have known a "legend." His was the first mission to open to the Affiliates when they began short-term mission service. (Co-author Agnes Walsh was the first Maryknoll Affiliate missionary.) A prime supporter of the Affiliates, he recognizes the essential value of laity in "short term mission" and in the Church.

A more humble person would be hard to find... but certainly Isaiah's Chapter 61 must resonate in John Beeching's inmost being "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me; he sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners..to give them oil of gladness..." or perhaps "honey"?

Thank you, Brother John.



Brother John Beeching sits among young novice Buddhist monks at a temple in Yangon, Burma.

MARYKNOLL'S RENAISSANCE MAN

Ralph and Kate Maughn – Seattle

It was at the Seattle Maryknoll House monthly Mission Forum that we first met **Brother John Beeching**. He was giving a talk about his work in Thailand and Burma.

We had recently returned from Nicaragua after volunteering for 3 months in an orphanage and were looking for new volunteer opportunities. Our interest was stimulated listening to Brother John talk about his work with refugee monks from Burma and Cambodia, as well as with displaced people with HIV and other serious illnesses.

His talk was captivating and the photos of his work remarkable. We later learned that one of Brother John's numerous talents is his extraordinary ability to capture photographic images. At the end of the talk we spoke to him and asked if he was taking volunteers. His "yes" began our lasting friendship with one of the most outstanding men we have ever known.

We have volunteered with Brother John many times in Thailand and continued some of his work in Burma over these past years. Brother John is a true renaissance man who speaks several languages, is an expert in world religions giving talks throughout Asia, and works tirelessly for the displaced and dispossessed. His ministry to the refugee monks and displaced people flourishes because he welcomes all volunteers and forms a community of compassion, understanding and service. Our years as Maryknoll Affiliates have been life-changing. We have been blessed to work with many Maryknoll Sisters, Fathers and Brothers, but nothing has changed our lives as much as our friendship with Brother John Beeching.



Brother Larry Kenning MM

cause he made such a strong impression on me. He just seemed to embody the firmness and reliability and steadiness of the grounds and earth he tended. He was also kind and nurturing to the many "friends" his mission brought to him and would bring them "good news," visiting them with understanding and love. Among those he visits are children in a residential school two hours outside Cochabamba. He goes three days a week to 'be with' both the kids and the houseparents, sharing his calm and wisdom in the turbulence of poverty and puberty. Brother Larry lives his life in active non-violence, fashioning a holistic and faith based life as did Ghandi. He works with nature, trees, earth and in his humility, effects the cosmos.

Brother Kenning is not a church builder, nor keynote speaker, nor "cover story" on any magazine. His is a quiet service being rendered to his brothers and sisters in great simplicity. He is an advisor to the AA program in the city and promotes it throughout Bolivia. The saying, "Preach the Gospel at all times, use words if necessary," is attributed to St. Francis. Brother Kenning's mission more truly fulfills St. Francis's actual written words: "Let all the brothers, however, preach by their deeds." Brother Kenning seldom needs words, but his poetry is another gift.

Thank you, Brother Larry.



Brother Larry planting trees in Bolivia



Brother John Beeching with Buddhist monk

WALKING HUMBLY WITH GOD

Veronica Gilligan – Long Island

Photos by Sean Sprague courtesy *Maryknoll* magazine

Maryknoll Brother Larry Kenning MM walks humbly with his God and with the people of Bolivia. As the person in charge of the gardens and grounds at the Maryknoll Mission Center and Language Institute in Cochabamba, Larry makes God's love visible through his tender care of the earth. So many students, visitors, and Maryknoll missionaries have been impacted by Brother Kenning, as they find beauty, order, peace, and refuge in his "unsigned" artwork. I was fortunate to meet and spend some time with this unassuming, gracious missionary who always had hospitality of heart for shared time, stories, fruits of his garden, and his poetry.

Although, in truth, I had forgotten his name, Brother Larry the person has always been in my prayers and thoughts be-

Photo courtesy of *Maryknoll* magazine



Jo Albright, Paula & David Schaffner, Renate Schneider

AFFILIATES IN HAITI

Photo and Article by Dave Schaffner – Central California Coast

Affiliates **Renate Schneider** (Chicago Central), **Dave and Paula Schaffner** (Central California Coast) and **Jo Albright** (NY Subway) gathered for this picture in Jeremie, Haiti. Renate, who lives in Jeremie a good part of the year, heads up Haitian Connection (Koneksyon Ayiti), an NGO that supports housing and micro-financing for women, and provides funds for the University of Nouvelle Grand'Anse (UNOGA). She is Vice-Rector at the university. UNOGA is in its second year of providing educational opportunities for students in the Grand'Anse Department. These young people were either displaced from their universities destroyed in the January 2010 earthquake or who otherwise need local access to higher education since travel by road to schools in Port au Prince is a difficult and expensive 8-10 hour trip.

The Schaffners were in Jeremie at Renate's request. Dave, Professor Emeritus from the Agribusiness Department of Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo, taught an Introduction to Agribusiness course in a six-week module, and Paula taught English as a Second Language along with **Jim Newmark**, a recent University of Chicago graduate, and **Cheryl Nichols**, an experienced ESL teacher from the Washington, D.C. area.

Jo Albright was in Jeremie visiting six young Haitian women—students for whom she is raising money to complete their secondary education and go on to college or a job. She began this project after teaching English in Renate's first language institute in 2007. There she met Alex, a worker in the office, who was also managing an orphanage. Jo took on the project of providing financial assistance when the girls left the orphanage without families to help them.

For more information see: <http://www.haitianconnection.org/>

M—O—P

Story and Photos By Carol-Ann Black – Northeast Florida

In October 2011, seven other parishioners and I traveled with our pastor, **Father Thanh Nguyen** from Christ the King Church, Jacksonville, Florida, to Kingston, Jamaica.

This mission trip, a fact-finding tour, was a first for Christ the King and for me. Father Thanh's wish is that his parish become more active in its commitment to the poorest of the poor. What can we do to give aid and comfort to the "disposable people" cared for by the Missionaries of the Poor? Speaking for myself, I went on this trip because of my connection with Maryknoll Affiliates over the past two or three years. Father Thanh has been hospitable to the Maryknoll Affiliates in the parish and supportive of the work of Maryknoll.



Father Thanh, our pastor, with a new friend

First, do you know who or what a M O P is? Our group learned that a MOP is neither a long-handled device for cleaning the floor, nor is it a short spelling of the word mope. A MOP is a Missionary of the Poor—a young man committed to "Joyful Service with Christ on the Cross." He has no concept of the word "mop" despite the fact that much of his work centers on the use of a mop to provide a decent living space for the poorest of the poor—the disposable people of the streets.

Father Thanh led us, three men and five women, to Kingston, Jamaica, to offer physical assistance to the religious Brothers as they labor with these physically and mentally challenged people. Our van service collected us at the airport in Kingston and delivered to our resting place for the next five days, a former hotel run by Franciscan Sisters to accommodate groups such as ours. We were immediately invited to participate in a special Mass for one of the Sisters who was celebrating her 100th birthday. During our first meal, we speculated about what lay before us on the next day, when we would drive into the slums of the city to do what we could for the Brothers and the people they serve.

After being welcomed by the Brothers, we were transported to the centers where we would work for the day. Four of our number worked with adult women offering companionship, dressing assistance, and feeding for those who could not manage on their own. Most important to these women was the human contact and comfort we offered. The other four worked with the children of Bethlehem House. Here we bathed and clothed and fed the children—and played and danced and sang. Father Thanh led the singing of Amen and Alleluia over and over with the children, and they loved

it. These youngsters have nothing—no toys, no games, no playground—only the loving and gentle care of the Brothers who tend to them day in and day out with kindness and humor and prayer.

Prayer comes every day at noon-time for everyone. We ate our noon meals with the Brothers after their (and our) ten-minute examination of conscience, and the Angelus, and devotions of the day. The Brothers generally were willing to share with us their background and engage in conversation. Then we went back to work. By 2:00 p.m. it was hot, hot, hot, and someone went out for some cold bottled water for the volunteers. Little did we suspect what a really huge treat cold water is for the children (we would have brought it for them). In order to share, one takes a good swig for oneself and then passes the bottle. The kids absolutely loved that cold, cold water. No, there were no paper cups. Almost no paper towels. And bath towels were used by several until they were sodden.

On Friday, our group visited the shelter for homeless men. Here the mission for the day became a complete scrub of the shelter's floors, from top to bottom, front to back, with a hose (no pressure nozzle) and brooms and scoops of detergent. The Brothers chose this day for cleaning because of the number of volunteers present. Our eight, plus five more from the Midwest, made it possible to finish all floors. A homeless shelter in the U.S. would look like a palace by comparison, but when we were finished it looked and smelled much better and would be more comfortable for the men for at least a little while. Again, in spite of the size of the tasks involved in maintaining this shelter, work stopped at noon and the lunch hour began with prayer.

Saturday, as rained poured down, we all went together to Jacob's Well, a shelter for homeless women. Again, we were met with hands and hugs and happy greetings—and music. They wanted to dance. They turned us all into dancing fools. These women seemed happier than the men and more cooperative with one another, assisting each other with their lunches and helping the brothers and volunteers clear up lunch remains.

That is pretty much the work that we did for, the poor with the wonderful Missionaries of the Poor Brothers. But all was not work. On several afternoons we stopped off at a well-known ice cream store for ice cream cones, and we got in a little touristy-type shopping as well. On Saturday we finished our work at noon and as we passed the Holy Trinity Cathedral, our driver, Noel, and spotted his friend the monsignor, pastor of the cathedral inside the fence. "Perhaps, the monsignor will let us inside the cathedral. It is very beautiful." The pastor guided us throughout our wonderful visit to a very beautiful cathedral. Sadly, with decay in the neighborhood, participation in parish life has declined to a pitiful level; they only have one Mass on Sunday, when at one time there were five and six, and many repair projects wait to be done.



Susan and Laurie with Devlin

Sunday Mass was celebrated at the chapel, where many of the residents were able to participate. They were beautifully dressed and groomed by the Brothers and in place well before the beginning of the Mass. Several of the children particularly remembered Father Thanh from the day before and greeted him with an amen or an alleluia. Families from the neighborhood also participated in the Mass and for the offering brought up various foodstuffs and a huge bag of melons—gifts from the heart, because all around the center was a poverty-stricken slum. After Mass, we were invited to lunch with the Brothers and Father Richard Ho Lung, the founder and director of the order. Father Thanh, who had visited this center in 1993 with a group of priests from the Boston area where he was serving at the time, was able to renew his acquaintance with Father Ho Lung.

Father Thanh was motivated by his desire to reach out to the poorest of the poor to organize our mission trip to Kingston, Jamaica, and the Missionaries of the Poor. He puts Father Ho Lung in the same category as Mother Theresa and Jean Vanier, founder of the L'Arche movement and expects that the world will one day know him equally well. (Father Ho Lung is the child of Chinese immigrants to Jamaica and lived there in poverty as a child. Ordained a priest of the Jesuit community in 1971, he withdrew from the Jesuits in 1980 and in 1981 started the Brothers of the Poor, which ultimately became the Missionaries of the Poor, as we know them today. For a fuller description of Father Ho Lung's work, go online to [Missionaries of the Poor](#).)

Currently, the Missionaries of the Poor are completing construction and organization of a new center, called The Holy Innocents Center. This center will serve the needs of pregnant women and their babies and will be staffed by five women who will complete their formation early in 2012. In the hope that Christ the King will be able to commit to the work of Father Ho Lung and the Missionaries of the Poor, Father Thanh has invited Father Ho Lung to visit the parish in the spring. They can look forward to his sharing the mission and the charism that captures the imagination of the world and has drawn more than 500 brothers to this labor of love.

MEDICAL MISSION SAYS “YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN. YOU MATTER.”

Story and Photos by Mary Morris Williams – Northeast Florida Maryknoll Affiliate

I'm not an astronaut, but my recent medical mission trip to Honduras took me to a place so different that it might have been the moon. Although I still have trouble getting my arms around this FAR OUT experience, it has renewed me and touched me with joy.

I was part of a group that provided medical care, dentistry and reading glasses to about 400 to 500 patients each day. Of the team of 23 volunteers, about half had participated in this mission work before, including three doctors and five nurses who had previously worked together and provided the backbone for the impressive organization.

Daily Routine

We rose earlier than I'm used to—between 6 and 6:30 a.m. By 7:30 a.m., the bus headed to the predetermined village where we used the local school for the medical day. A “pharmacy” of approximately 20 suitcases was transported with us. Classrooms were assigned to consulting doctors, dentistry, pharmacy, and reading glasses. Outside three triage nurses and their interpreters talked to patients and decided what they needed.



Counting pills for the Lord in our makeshift pharmacy/classroom with patients waiting in the background.

Most days I helped in the pharmacy area—a “pill counter” for the Lord. One morning I helped the children pick up garbage. Like the whole country, the school area had lots of litter, papers, and soda bottles. Two mornings I helped distribute rosary beads and read the Hail Mary in Spanish with the women who were waiting to be seen. The children loved to wear the rosary beads around their necks as jewelry. We also gave out baseball caps and soccer balls, which the children loved as they soaked up adult attention.

Adjustments

Trips like this demand extra thoughtfulness. Our team was warned not to drink the water. Each of us received a bottle of water in the evening and could refill it during the day from water we brought to the villages in huge containers. Brushing my teeth was a whole new challenge. Our hotel had basic plumbing, but out in the villages we needed to rely on available out-houses and carry toilet paper and hand sanitizer with us—another challenge for someone with limited experience in roughing it.

Spiritual Food

Fr. Ron Camarda, a retired navy chaplain, accompanied us. Each morning on the bus he led us in prayer, and each evening he celebrated mass at the hotel, providing an opportunity for team members to share daily reactions to our work. This aspect provided a retreat-like atmosphere that reminded me that I was serving the Lord by serving His people.



Father Ron Camarda and the boys, getting ready to play soccer.

Honduran Help and Hospitality

Nine or ten professionals from Yoro accompanied us daily and worked alongside our team. These health professionals, translators, and helpers went above and beyond their usual duties to reach out to the poor. They also showered us with their generosity and warmth. We experienced their hospitality at a wonderful lamb barbecue at the home of Maria Luisa and a special party at the home of Marina Pavon, their pharmacist. As I gave, I received more in return.

Re-entry

The trip was well worth getting the required inoculations, taking malaria pills, travelling to a poor country. The people we served are so in need of care and attention and have SO LITTLE. I feel it's a way of telling them, “You are not forgotten; you matter.” I wish there were a simple way of integrating this mission week into my life. It's so FAR OUT that it's hard to get my arms around it. While sorting out these

issues, I remembered a song by Susan Carmichael, a Jacksonville musician, *I Go up to the Mountains*.

*I go up to the mountains where the air is crisp and clear
To listen to the voice of God so difficult to hear,
amid the noise and clamor of the city streets below.
I journey to the mountains, for my Father bids me go.
I go up to the mountains where I long to be.
It's there I am renewed in Him that I might clearly see
the path I need to travel through, the city streets below,
returning to the valley, for my Father bids me go.*

This mission trip has renewed me, given me a spiritual Vitamin B shot. This experience shook me up, jiggled my insides, and altered my usual routines. It has revived my sense of humor and touched me with joy. Hopefully, it has made me more aware of the voice of God, more alert to His presence and more open to His calling and direction.

YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE
Ronni Gilligan – Long Island

"YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE!"... that's the message Mary and Joseph heard two thousand years ago: "No room in the inn." Knowing the rest of the story, I would think the "inns" or "hearts" would have undergone renovation.



<http://www.cruzblanca.org/hermanoleon>

"YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE", was the shout I heard as I was leaving a most pleasant open house at an art museum in Holly Springs, Mississippi. The cold warning was aimed at two well dressed and nice looking, black high school guys who were walking up the steps as I was walking down (Well, I almost fell down upon hearing that!) The lady who had been very helpful to me in the open house stuck her head out again and asked, "Are they with you?" To which I quickly responded, "YES," not knowing either of them. It turns out that they recognized me. I had offered to help them with homework a few weeks before at the soup kitchen, Garden Cafe. I asked why they were "here" and they said they saw a crowd and wondered what was going on, the same reason I had wandered in. They were obviously dejected and were "going home" till I said what good food and drink were inside and that I'd go back with them. We walked around for a while looking at the paintings and eating the food that looked good to them, pretzels. I did not make eye contact with a single white person with whom I'd been previously chatting and laughing. (I guess courage comes in a little bit at a time.) A most interesting and unforgettable evening for me. I learn so much volunteering for Sacred Heart Southern Missions. This year I was there from late October till Dec. 17th.

"YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE" is the message my friend's mother is getting from the American Embassy. Jollanda and Ari are very hard working legal immigrants who won a lot-

tery for entry to the U.S. from Albania. They have been here three years and just had their first child at Halloween. Ari works two jobs and sleeps only 3-4 hours a day. Jollanda is a NYC teacher assistant, soon to get her regular teaching license, but is now on maternity leave. They put in papers for her mom to come for six months to help. Denied. They will try again.

"YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE." My birthday present to myself was one week touring Palestine/Israel followed by a second week with Otar, a friend whom I had met in Bahrain when I worked there. I recently found her after not being in touch in over 33 years. I had contacted overseas newspapers, women's groups, schools for the blind, travel agencies and every lead I could get trying to find her. I knew her first name, Otar, that she was blind, about 60 years old, a Muslim Palestinian, and that she had been a teacher, but I didn't remember her last name. Imagine my surprise when one evening a person called from California and said, "I think I might know the woman you are looking for." Imagine Otar's surprise when I called her at her home in the West Bank!

One of my hopes in my trip to the Holy Land was that I could balance some of my very strong pro-Palestine stances with a more open-minded approach. I failed! It would take a whole book to tell how Otar could not travel with me to Jerusalem without written "permission," or that one Friday, the Islamic day of worship, at one of the gates to Jerusalem, I saw many, many singles, couples, family groups, and Muslim pilgrimage groups being told, "You can't come in here," backed up by fifty or more young armed Israelis. The soldiers were all over the country, both Israel and West Bank, where I traveled. I've also seen the "settlements," which I thought would be like our Old West towns, not the the gated spa communities that they are, complete with pools and lush vegetation while it is a serious problem for the Palestinians to get water. I did feel safe on both sides of the security fence, but the injustice and life-thwarting actions were evident--at least to anyone who was Arab or Christian. I abhor the violent response of some Palestinians and wish they would use public media rather than bombs. I applaud their many nonviolent actions. I say, "Inshallah."

THEMES FOR NOT SO FAR AFIELD 2012

As a reminder the themes for *Not So Far Afield* for future editions and the deadlines for submission of articles are below. Articles welcome!

May/June 2012: *Good Stewardship of God's Creation* - deadline 3/16/12

July/August 2012: *Refugees and Migration* - deadline 5/18/12

September/October 2012: *Mission in Partnership* - deadline 7/20/12

November/December 2012: *Mission in the United States* - deadline 9/14/12

ROSA NERY FUENTES SUÁREZ

May 26, 1931 – January 17, 2012

Rosa Nery Fuentes Suárez was a Maryknoll Affiliate with the Merida Chapter, Yucatan since 2006. We shared with her a small part of her life, which she undoubtedly lived as a witness to God. We will always remember her as a pioneering person, active, enthusiastic, spreading love and friendship to all places, bearing the Maryknoll missionary charism, especially in her trips to Panama and in the community of San Sebastian in Merida. Nery expressed her various experiences in oil paintings, where the vast range of colors conveyed the human feeling of her experiences.



Rosa Nery Fuentes Suárez with Sister Theresa Maksym MM

“Nery: You will not be forgotten in our Christian hearts. Dear friend do you remember those diocesan gatherings of Catholic Youth Action and our see, judge, act dynamics? Was your enthusiastic participation in supporting your brothers and sisters in mission the small steps to get to where you are—peacefully in the arms the Lord? “J. Barrientos



Maria Stuart teaching Buddhist monks in Thailand

MARIA URSONE STEWART

Maria Ursone Stewart of Lakewood, NJ, died on December 6th, 2011 after an extensive illness. Her family is especially thankful to VanDyke Hospice for their loving care. The daughter of the late Frank D. Ursone, M.D. and Clementina (D’Angelo) Ursone, she was born and raised in Norfolk, CT. Maria graduated from Tufts University in 1956. After raising her children, she then worked in the Financial Aid field at

several institutions of higher learning. She volunteered with CONTACT, Al Anon, a variety of hotlines. Maria had been a Maryknoll Affiliate with the New Jersey Chapter and for the past ten years volunteered in Africa, Thailand and Bangladesh with Maryknoll. She is predeceased by a son, Norman Thomas Stewart, Jr. and is survived by one brother, John Ursone, three daughters, Maria Stewart Moscaritolo, Tracey Stewart and Lisa Stewart Glen, one son, John Stewart, and fourteen grandchildren. A Memorial Mass was celebrated on December 17, 2011, at the Lady Chapel, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers.

Father Bill McIntire MM and other Maryknoll Missioner remembered Maria at masses in Bangladesh. Father McIntire wrote, “Our dear Maria came and taught three terms at the ‘Bacha’ School.”

NEW MEMBERS OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATE FAMILY

While we mourn the loss of and remember with love dear friends like Nery and Maria, we also celebrate the coming of new life into our Maryknoll Affiliates family.

Joara Mitllari Brahelilcq



Joara Mitllari Brahelilcq was born October 31, 2011 to **Jollanda and Ari Brahelilcq** (Long Island). All are doing well and made it to the January meeting of the Chapter.

Joara wearing a bib that says why we all like to go to Maryknoll Affiliate meetings

Sumaq Maqqe

Victor, Maybee, Diana and Megan Maqqe (Puno, Peru/South Bend) announced the arrival of their new daughter/sister into the world on Wednesday, December 14, 2011. Victor wrote, “Sumaq Maqqe weighed in at a healthy 7 pounds with a happy look in her face. We’ve received our Christmas present a bit earlier and that only announces a wonderful Christmas season.”



Diana and Megan with their new sister, Sumaq

Please let us know whenever there is a “new member” of your Chapter!

NEWS FROM THE KNOLL

National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC)

On November 17, 18 & 19, 2011, 25,000 Junior and Senior High School students, teachers and youth ministers attended the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis. Maryknoll had two large booths staffed by Maryknoll Society employees, Maryknoll Sisters, Brothers, Fathers and a Candidate and Maryknoll Affiliates **Florence and Tom McGuire** and **Kathie Gribble**. They told the Maryknoll story to thousands of young Catholics, distributed t-shirts with a "Call to Mission" message and shared Maryknoll Magazine. Students sent hundreds of post cards to Maryknoll missionaries and signed wooden tablets with prayerful messages to be hung in the Maryknoll Museum.

Centennials' Commemoration of Three Founders

This Spring, three trees will be planted on the grassy knoll in front of the Society Center Building commemorating our three Founders. Three plaques will be placed with these trees and inscribed as follows: "The Maryknoll Family plants this (type of tree) in gratitude to our Founders, Bishop James A. Walsh, Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, and Fr. Thomas F. Price, as a living tribute to the seeds of mission they planted here 100 years ago."

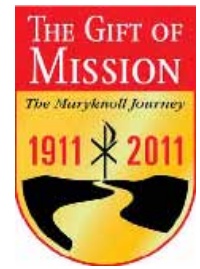
Bridging Ceremony (Sue Baldus, MM & Peg Dillon, MM)

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 2011, marked the end of the Society's Centennial year. The festive celebration of late afternoon Mass and dinner was followed by a Bridging Ceremony, tying the Society's Centennial ending to the beginning of our Centennial year on January 6, 2012. The Processional Cross was used as the 'bridge.' This cross is used by the Society in all its special liturgies and contains the relics of Bishop James Anthony Walsh, Fr. Thomas Fredrick Price, Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, Brother Aloysius Moliner and Maryknoll Lay Missioner, Joseph Honerkamp. It will remain in our Chapel throughout our Centennial year.



DEATHS

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Rev. Walter T. Kelleher, M.M. | November 7, 2011 |
| Brother John J. Wohead, M.M. | November 16, 2011 |
| Sr. M. Elenita Barry, M.M. | November 30, 2011 |
| Rev. John B. Keaney, M.M. | December 6, 2011 |
| Rev. Anthony B. Brodniak, M.M. | December 21, 2011 |
| Sr. Marian Pahl, M.M. | December 30, 2011 |
| Sister Anita Macwilliam, M.M. | January 1, 2012 |
| Rev. Charles J. Mc Padden, M.M. | January 30, 2012 |
| Rev. Peter J. Petrucci, M.M. | February 1, 2012 |
| Rev. Richard G. Laszewski, M.M. | February 12, 2012 |



100th Jubilee Celebrations

We will post the Centennial events for the Society and the Congregation here and on our website. Events and dates are subject to change, so be sure to check [our website](#) for the latest information.

March 3 – May 21, 2012: Centennial Art Exhibit with Yoo Soo Kim in the Maryknoll Sisters Center Foyer.

March 4, 2012, 3:00 PM: Sixth Annual Music for the World Concert at the Maryknoll Sisters Center, Proceeds from the ticket price -- \$25.00 per person -- support the Sisters' global outreach in mission in 25 countries around the world.

April 20-22, 2012: Hearts on Fire : Maryknoll Sisters Mission Symposium with Keynote Speakers Sr. Jaruko Doi, MM; Sr. Melinda Roper, MM and Sr. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ at Maryknoll Sisters Center Chapel.

May 16-17, 2012: Maryknoll on the Hill: A Centennial Event in Washington, DC. May 16: Mass at Holy Redeemer Parish 200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. May 17: Visits to Government Offices and Evening Reception with reps from Congress, UCCB, others.

June 2, 2012: Dedication of the Garden of Gratitude and Promise at Maryknoll Sisters, 3:00 PM.

June 3, 2012: Celebration of Sisters' Land Preservation at Maryknoll Sisters In celebration of the Conservation Easement encompassing the wetland & woodland area of the Maryknoll Sisters Center, 2:30 PM.

NOTE: For the above two events, Kindly RSVP by Friday, May 4, 2012 at mksreservation@gmail.com or call 914-941-0783 x 5624.

July 2, 2012: Miriam College Glee Club in Concert.

September 28 – October 1, 2012: Joint Maryknoll Mission Symposium at Society & Congregation Centers. Speakers: Ms. Patricia Licuanan, Ched Myers Bishop Alvaro Ramazini, Ms. Ana Tibaijuka, and others.

October 27, 2012: Maryknoll Sisters Multicultural Festival and Bazaar at the Maryknoll Sisters.

January 6, 2012: Closing Liturgy for the Public at the Maryknoll Sisters.

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