

Always A Missioner

a newsletter for MKLM Returned Missioners

Welcome to Always a Missioner,

a bi-annual publication of Maryknoll Lay Missioners, designed to keep you informed about the organization and one another. I, Cecilia Espinoza ('85 Chile/US) now serve as your contact person.

Please send me any news about your family, your work, and any important theme you would like to share with other Returned Missioners. During 2009 I will send out periodic email updates. We really need your e-mail address to keep you updated. Keep us informed of address and phone changes as well.

Thanks, Cecilia

alwaysamissioner@mklm.org

414-736-2268

WORDS FROM MKLM LEADERSHIP

Christmas greetings!

Dear friends,

Christmas greetings from Bethany!

As you know, I was asked by our Board of Directors in June to assume the position of Executive Director of Maryknoll Lay Missioners. I am privileged to take on this responsibility at a time when the role of the laity in mission becomes evermore important as the number of religious and priests available for mission continues to diminish. The call of the laity to serve is

crucial in today's world and as Maryknoll Lay Missioners we are well positioned to help the movement.



**Sam Stanton,
Executive Director**

For those of you that don't know me, my wife Cecilia and I joined Maryknoll in 1985 along with 29 other adults! We have 3 children and we served in southern Chile in the diocese of Linares in rural and

continued on page 2

Reconnected to the privilege and gift that is mission

By Phil Brady and Mary Jo Commerford '94 Venezuela/US

Reasons abound to feel apprehensive when returning to visit a previous mission site. How will I feel if my friends are worse off now than before? Will people resent us for abandoning them? Will I regret choices that I made now that I see what has come to pass? It is strange that we worry about the



Venezuela Kids: Pachi and Maia Rodriguez, Sarah and Maza Brady with friends.

future when we start in mission and then we worry about the past after leaving a mission site.

Perhaps one can consider choosing to return to a mission placement as an echo of the call that began the adventure. Just as it felt right to go abroad fifteen years

continued on page 3

Christmas greetings.....

ministry. Since 2004 we have lived in Milwaukee and I have traveled to various parts of the country working with major donors of MKLM.

As I assume this new responsibility I want to thank Kevin Mestrich for his years of service as Executive Director. I was director when Kevin entered Maryknoll in 1992. He assumed very constructive educational ministries in Nairobi, Kenya for 11 years. As ED he helped our organization overcome a time of crisis and develop a system that will help us stabilize organizationally and professionally. I am especially grateful to Kevin for the high level Board of Directors he brought together. We wish Kevin and his wife Agnes and their two daughters many blessings in the years to come.

As we close out 2008 we are grateful for so many goals achieved. We witnessed the second Maryknoll International Service Orientation (MISO) program unfold in July. Twenty-five young and not so young volunteers with other mission organizations had Bethany “rocking” with excitement and enthusiasm for three weeks. Formation of laity in mission is something we are experts at doing and want to continue to offer to others. It is a great way to help more young people get to know us.

I truly hope that in the years to come we can continue to strengthen our ties with each and every one of you. All of you that have been a part of Maryknoll have experienced something special. You bring that experience back to your jobs and lives in your local communities, dioceses and parishes. I truly consider you to be an intrinsic part of Maryknoll Lay Missioners, our past and our future. With your help we can continue to build a more effective organization for the good of mission and the role of laity in that mission.

We thank God for all these tremendous blessings but we also face great challenges. The current global economic crisis has brought reductions to our endowment, forcing us to reduce next year’s incoming class to 10 and “tightening the belt” in all areas. Yet, we are confident that through the help of our donors, board, and all of you, Maryknoll Lay Missioners will make it through yet another challenge and continue to give witness of the good news of Jesus in work and word around the world.

Christmas blessings of peace to all,

Sam Stanton, Executive Director

HIGHLIGHTS

Barbara Fraser, '89 Peru

Barb Fraser received 2008 Egan Award for Journalistic Excellence.

Each year, Catholic Relief Services presents the Egan Award for Journalistic Excellence to journalists writing for U.S. Catholic publications on issues related to international humanitarian work. Eileen Egan was Catholic Relief Services’ first profes-

sional staff layperson. She worked for more than 40 years assisting those in need in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Catholic Relief Services grants the award to journalists who best exemplify Eileen Egan’s spirit in giving a voice to the poorest among us.

Barbara Fraser won the award for her article “*No Longer Silent.*”

Her feature tells the story of women and children who survived Peru’s civil war. These survivors now find hope and strength together.

The panel of judges included Keith Jenkins, *The Washington Post*; Tamara Jones, *The Washington Post*; and Rachel Zoll, the national religion reporter with the *Associated Press*.

Reconnected to...

ago, the time felt right to return and reconnect now. This was especially true for our daughters, Sarah who is now a freshman at Seattle University and Maza, who is a busy junior in high school. Even though they had internalized the experience of Venezuela for having grown up in Venezuela, they expressed a desire to understand the country in adult concepts. Because they have grown so much in the last five years and because life in the U.S. is so overwhelming, it was easy to imagine that their childhood was not really real. Judging from the political and economic questions they asked during our trip, I think their curiosity was satisfied.

We left Venezuela just as the country was emerging from three coup attempts against the government and the lives of our friends were becoming desperate due to the near collapse of the economy. So returning to Venezuela carried the fear that our friends would still be struggling and suffering. Our experience, however, was that the country has not only pulled itself together but is taking big strides forward in terms of education, health care, and economic enterprises.

This was made clear to us one evening when many of our old friends gathered to celebrate with us. First we asked for a show of hands of who was going to school. Amazingly, out of 30 adults, 20 were either attending college or a vocational training program. Even though poverty is still present and crime is still a serious problem, a spirit of hope and community feels omnipresent and even surprises those of us who have been living in the North too long.

Maryknoll no longer has a presence in Venezuela, but the work of the past is coming to fruition because

many of the former collaborators of Maryknoll have built on the spiritual values and community orientation of Maryknoll and are now active in government social projects.

After finding out who was going to school, each person in turn talked about what they were doing. In a way that all missionaries can appreciate, it was gratifying to see what they are doing for themselves and their community and humbling to hear them express what we meant to them. Nellie, for example, was a school janitor who joined Mary Jo's women's group. Now she is completing a degree program to become a schoolteacher. Martha has become the housing committee chairperson for the local neighborhood council. But she pointed out that her first experience of community involvement was in Phil's ecology group.

Our visit to Venezuela closed with one last encounter that did not look back on our prior experience, but instead, exemplified a future interconnected world community. We gathered our family with the family of David Rodriguez and Lisa Sullivan and two other Venezuelan families who had been collaborators with us. While the adults were having a wonderful time, the children, now young adults, were ecstatic to encounter a group of peers with international interests and communal spirituality. One was going to Russia to study engineering, several were going to Catholic Universities, and all are going to make a difference in the world.

There could be no doubt that returning to Venezuela and to the people who shared mission with us rerooted our family. We may not have an opportunity again for all of us to travel this particular journey but touching down briefly erased our apprehensions and reconnected to the privilege and gift that is mission.



Phil and Mary Jo, David and Lisa with community friends.

6th MKLM General Assembly

Delegates from each of MKLM's 12 regions, leadership and participants with voice but no vote from the MKLM Board of Directors, the Society, the Congregation and the MKLM staff were present. The GA was preceded by a two-day mission forum with all delegates of the assemblies of the Association and Congregation and the Society's Chapter. All three gatherings were held simultaneously.

During the GA the delegates voted to do the following:

- Statutes that deal with governance are now the responsibility of the Board of Directors. This specifically signifies the selection, oversight and evaluation of the Executive Director and Director of Missions. (A third such position, that of Director of US Operations will not be filled for the time being). The Mission Forum (see below) will make recommendations to the BOD.

- Statutes that deal with charisma and how mission is carried out in the regions fall under the authority of the newly created Mission Forum.

- The Mission Forum will take place for one day following the annual Global Council (Regional Coordinators and leadership) meeting. While the Mission Forum is made up of the leadership and Regional Coordinators, other stakeholders, such as department directors, board members, and representatives from the other Maryknoll entities may be invited at the discretion of leadership. These stakeholders will have voice but no vote.

- The General Assembly as articulated in the original statutes stands dissolved.
- Guidelines for Eligibility for MKLM leadership roles were established. One of those guidelines states that it is preferable for Regional Coordinators to have completed at least one contract.
- An assessment of Maryknoll Lay Missioners in mission, including an assessment of regional viability, will be carried out. The purpose of the assessment is to determine how



we can best effectively use our resources and how many regions we can effectively be in.

As a part of the GA, a paper on Culture and Identity of laity in mission with Maryknoll was presented. An ongoing process of reflection on

this issue has been set up.

The GA was skillfully facilitated by Sister Barbara Valuckas, SSND, who helped create a reflective and respectful environment. Each day started with faith sharing in the context of the Eucharist and Sister Barbara guided the delegates in developing skills in non-violent communication.

GA 2008

To see the full text of the decisions of the GA as well as the report on the mission forum that preceded the GA, go to the Always a Missioner website at www.alwaysamissioner.org.

(When you do: User name = Password =).

SPOTLIGHT ON OVERSEAS MISSION

A Half of my life in Tanzania

Having just recently turned the big “50”, it has been interesting to look back and see how the first 25 years were all in preparation for the most recent 25 years spent in mission in Tanzania. What struck me is that during my years of “preparation”, I was for the most part totally unaware that I was in fact being prepared for anything in particular. It wasn’t until joining Maryknoll that I could “see” what had been happening in my life. And, mission became a long litany of “ah ha!” moments. It has been an amazing journey and I have come to know that whether I am aware of it or not, God continues to prepare me for more that is to come. I can’t speak of any grand accomplishments, although there have been enough little successes along the way to assure me that God is in fact using me from time to time – and that is very comforting.

Likewise, God has used the people of Tanzania to teach me a thing or two. Important life lessons like: keep smiling, slow down – no one else is in a hurry, food should be cooked slowly, eaten slowly and always shared, relationships are the foundation of life, be quick to forgive and slow to anger (besides my Swahili always gets horrendously bad the minute I get

angry), that bad stuff sometimes just happens and you deal with it and move on, and most importantly – that I have limits. I’d sum up my life in mission as “an ongoing humbling experience”. It has stretched me further than I ever remember asking to be stretched. During the stretching, the best and worst of me has come out. God has always been there to help me deal with it all. I’ve learned that when you can’t always change your reality, you always have a choice in how you view it. There have been rainy seasons that seemed to provide endless rainbows and other rainy seasons when all I saw was mud, mud and more mud – forgetting to look up!

The most unexpected blessings that my mission years have brought me – are my wonderful children and husband – and now grandchildren. Watching each of our children grow up here and waiting in wonder to see how these experiences are preparing them for some unknown future plans of God, continues to be a truly amazing experience. So I have Maryknoll to thank, for setting me off into this great unknown 25 years ago and for hanging in there with me. What a gift! **Joanne Miya ’83 Tanzania.**



Joanne Miya and Freddy Agoro

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

Telling the stories of many

I applied to join the Maryknoll Lay Missioners in 1982 while a Milwaukee Archdiocese lay missionary (1980-1983) in Colombia temporarily working as a volunteer editor at Latin America Press/Noticias Aliadas in Lima, Peru. Joining Maryknoll, I agreed to serve at UCA News (Union of Catholic Asian News) in Hong Kong, where I was news editor from 1984 until 1989, also a founding member of Refugee Concern Hong Kong, an advocacy NGO for Vietnamese boat people.

As a MARYKNOLL magazine associate editor in 1990-1993, I returned to Asia each summer as a

correspondent for both MARYKNOLL and UCA News. In 1993, I moved to Bangkok to manage Maryknoll’s center house/office and assist refugees at Bangkok’s Immigration Detention Center, remaining a correspondent of the UCA News until 1997. In 2001, I joined the Maryknoll mission team in Chiang Mai, northern Thailand, to help Burma refugee ethnic groups cooperate in a common news service. I also rejoined UCA News part-time. As 11 tribal groups started Burma News International, I edited their daily output into international English. In 2005 I left BNI to work with AMAN, a Bangkok Muslim NGO starting an interreligious peace study program to provide Asian Christian, Hindu,

Buddhist and especially Muslim university students, rights activists and NGO workers, to understand their and other faith’s peace values.

Over the years I have met Sandinistas, Senderos, Shanghai and Vietnam Communist leaders, underground and aboveground; Chinese bishops, East Timor survivors, Vietnamese boat people, Muslim peacemakers, and poor, ordinary people in their homes or homeless. My work has been to tell their stories, too many to recount here. Now 72, I will retire as a Maryknoll Lay Missioner December 31 after 25 years, and am seeking new adventures, God willing. **Jim Champion, ’83 Hong Kong/Thailand.**

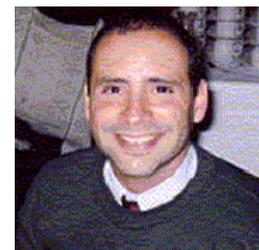
He is not one of us!

The needs of asylum seekers and refugees are always evolving, as is the way people perceive those needs. As part of my early Jesuit formation, I visited asylum seekers at the Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre in Melbourne. After a month away I resumed my visits and, now sporting a very dark beard, was greeted by a group of Iranian asylum seekers. The men, most of them clean-shaven, commented on my beard; they exclaimed, ‘Sacha, you now look more like a terrorist than we do!’

When the visiting period was over, I told one of the guards that I was ready to go. He said, ‘Of course you are!’ It took me a little while to realize that, with my Mediterranean looks and dark beard, he thought I was one of the asylum seekers. And, unbeknownst to me, I had dropped my visitor’s pass

somewhere. The guard wasn’t about to let me go! One of the Iranian men said to the guard, ‘It’s ok; he is not one of us!’ The guard only believed me when another chaplain confirmed that I was with her.

I remember the fear and anxiety I experienced when I suddenly felt myself a prisoner. I have also often reflected on those words, ‘he is not one of us’, and on what makes us feel that we are accepted and belong, or that we are feared and ostracized. And I have also wondered how it is that our appearance, which in turn connotes a particular culture, background or religion, has so much to do with how we are treated. I let my beard grow again last year, and



Originally from Nicaragua, Sacha Bermudez-Goldman (MKLM '91) served in Tanzania and Cambodia for 7 years. Now a Jesuit priest since 2007, he is currently the Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service Australia.

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Challenging and Thoughtful

A school outreach presentation to students of advanced French at Riverside High School in inner-city Milwaukee, Wisconsin, proved rewarding and inspiring for American Translator Association (ATA) member Patrice Van Hyle. The owner of Milwaukee-based PVH TRANSLATE LLC, a French and Italian language service provider, Patrice translates and interprets in a variety of subject areas and has written for a number of periodicals in the U.S. and abroad. Although she has taught French and Italian extensively, she was particularly impressed by the Riverside students.



Patrice Van Hyle ('94) served as a Maryknoll Lay Missioner in Japan from 1994 -1999

“I spoke to 15 seniors who were just days away from graduation. In spite of their excitement, they were very focused on my presentation and asked incredibly challenging and thoughtful questions.” Because they were poised for college, she said, “the whole discussion of using your foreign language in a real job was very pertinent and useful.”

After explaining the difference between translation and interpreting, Patrice discussed the skills and personality traits best suited for each. She also described a translator’s typical day, illustrating the importance of terminology and research with quotes from an article in The ATA Chronicle on technical translation by veteran translator and fellow Milwaukee local Nicholas Hartmann. “The students commented that they did not realize how complex and

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HE IS NOT.... *continued from page 6*

I was reminded of this over and over as fellow air travelers looked suspiciously at my backpack, or as others left empty seats next to me on the tram, or stared at me as I walked down the street.

While not universal, these responses helped me become more aware of my own biases and preconceptions about people of different cultures and faith traditions. They also raised some challenging questions. As we live out our faith and mission, do we truly believe that Jesus' message of compassion and justice is intended for all peoples, especially for those who suffer from persecution? In our service of faith, directed towards the justice of God's Kingdom, how do we make sure that we do not create and promote an exclusive Kingdom? And what do I need to learn and understand about others in order to avoid falling into this trap? **Sacha Bermudez-Goldman, SJ**

CHALLENGING... *continued from page 6*

multifaceted the translation and interpreting field was, and said how much they appreciated learning the ins and outs from a professional," she noted.

Though Riverside faces many of the challenges common to urban schools, Patrice found the students well prepared and enthusiastic. "My entire presentation was conducted in French," she noted, "and the students had no problem understanding me and communicating back to me at their level. They were not inhibited to speak even if they made mistakes. I was impressed by their academic accomplishments. They have overcome a lot of hardships, and I am glad The ATA Chronicle is highlighting their efforts."

The ATA Chronicle - February 2008

UPDATES: MARYKNOLL COMMUNITY

Maryknoll Society and Congregation Elect New Leadership



From left: Sisters Ann Hayden, Bitrina Kirway, Rebecca Macugay and Janice McLaughlin.

Both the Maryknoll Sisters and the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers have elected their new leadership teams. They will serve for the next six years. At its 16th General Assembly, Maryknoll

Sisters elected Sr. Janice McLaughlin, President; Sr. Rebecca Macugay, Vice President; and Srs. Ann Hayden and Bitrina Kirway as Counselors. Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers' General Chapter resulted in the election of Fr. Ed Dougherty as its next Superior General; Fr. Jose Aramburu as Vicar General; and Frs. Paul Masson and Ed McGovern as Counselors.

New Leadership Installation

On Nov 25, during the Recessional Hymn of the Installation Ceremony for the new General Council in the main chapel, the bells at the Society Center Building pealed in jubilation. The Congregation's transition ceremony will be celebrated on January 4, 2009. Let us keep both teams in our prayers.

MKLM Executive Director, Sam Stanton, and Director of Missions, Alicia Butkiewicz expressed their best wishes for the newly elected leadership teams and look forward to working with them as each entity strives to achieve its goals in mission.



From left: Fathers Ed McGovern, Ed Dougherty, Paul Masson and Jose Aramburu.

Special Goodbyes

The past year marked the departure of several members to continue their mission journey on new paths. Please join us in thanking and blessing them as well as embracing and supporting them in the Returned Missioners network:

December 2007: West Cosgrove, class of 1985, served in Venezuela, US West, and at US/Mexican Border at El Paso-Ciudad Juarez, and Jean Walsh, class of 1997, served in Mexico and US East.

March 2008: Claudia Bohnert, class of 2005, served in Tanzania and Michael Thaibinh, class of 2003, served in Thailand.

June 2008: Jim and Hang Tran Tuka, class of 2004, served in Vietnam, Carmen Matty-Cervantes, class of 2004, served in Tanzania, Kevin & Christine Cahalan, class of 2004, served in Kenya, Kevin Mestrich, class of 1992, served in Kenya and US East, Joe and Denise Sandman, Class of 2002, served in Brazil.

August 2008: Jenny Vande Hei, class of 2006, served in Tanzania and Pooja & Chong Park, class of

2001, served in Vietnam and US East.

October 2008: Meagan Doty, class of 2007, assigned to Tanzania.

Visit and Contribute to our Intranet: AlwaysAMissioner.org!

Login: **always** Password: **missioner**

Sections of note:

- **Always Update:** highlights about returned missioners as well as developments in the current life of MKLM
- **Events:** rallies, reunions, and retreats
- **Resources:** who to contact and how to reach them
- **Discussion Forum:** post a note for your long-lost classmate!
- **Request a Prayer:** post a request so that we may all join you in praying for a special need. Submissions are posted live by you
- **Submit an Announcement:** send in stories about your new baby, new job, or any other news you'd like to share. Submissions are sent to Returned Missioner Manager for inclusion in future "Always Updates"

Make this Intranet your Intranet!

STUDIES AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Drew University Seeks Partnership with Volunteers for its New Teaching Program

Drew University, located in Madison, New Jersey, has established a new Master of Arts in teaching program and is encouraging returned volunteers to inquire.

Cecilia Espinoza and Michelle Born will meet with Linda Swerdlow on December 16 to establish a partnership between the school and MKLM.

For more information on the program contact Linda at lswerdlo@drew.edu

The University of Notre Dame, Department of Theology offers a Master of Divinity to Returned Missioners

This is a three-year professional degree which prepares people for a career in ministry.

The University of Notre Dame provides a full tuition scholarship to all of the students they admit. To have more information on this program go to this website: <http://mdiv.nd.edu/>

Please call Cecilia at her cell-phone: 414-736-2268 to send you the brochure.

Spanish teacher position(s) for Catholic elementary school in Riverdale, north Bronx, and/or New Rochelle

Could combine the three schools above for a full-time position with benefits; or teach part-time at any one of the schools on a per-diem basis. Position open immediately with the start of the new year.

Please contact RM **Felicia Gehrig** for more information and for school principals contact information at jfgehrig@yahoo.com

Celebracion de la Vida

Mikel Rodriguez, the son of Lisa Sullivan and David Rodriguez (Bolivia/Venezuela 1984-2005) was married to Nancy Richman in two lovely outdoor ceremonies in California and Venezuela. The first was a Quaker ceremony on June 21st in the wooded mountains of Santa Cruz California. The second was a "celebración de la vida" on July 5th at the Rodriguez-Sullivan mountain home in Sanare, Venezuela. Both families were present for both events, helped by the fact that the entire Richman gang is totally fluent in Spanish. Afterwards, the families celebrated by squeezing into an ancient jeep and bouncing hours up and down mountains to the coastal town of Choroni for a fun extended-family honeymoon for 3 days, before leaving the newlyweds to enjoy the gorgeous Caribbean beaches on their own. Mikel is in a doctoral program for Computer Science at the University of Central Florida and will receive his doctorate next summer. Nancy is in her third year of teaching high-school Spanish. Mikel and Nancy met at Earlham College, which both of their moms and all of their siblings also attended.



top row: Jeff Richman, David Rodriguez, Nancy Richman-Rodriguez, Mikel Rodriguez, Lisa Sullivan, Kathy Richman bottom row: Pachi Rodriguez, Nora Richman, Daniel Amaro (best man), Maia Rodriguez

CHURCH TALKS

Returned Missioners help Make Church Talks a Success!

- Jim and Hang Tran Tuka
- Vicki Simon
- Jean Walsh
- Doug Meeker
- Fr. Bill Vos
- Carmen Matty Cervantes
- Chris and Kevin Cahalan
- Maggie Fogarty and Tim Provencal
- Kim and Patty LaMothe
- Gigi Gruenke
- Anita and Curt Klueg
- Sean Fleming and Ana Maria Abugattas

We are truly grateful to the above persons who spoke at one (or more) church date(s). You are a treasure!

If you would like to welcome Maryknoll Lay Missioners to speak at your parish, please contact: Ellen O'Connell at 610-622-5012 or ocConnell@mklm.org.

UPDATES: RETURNED MISSIONERS

CONGRATULATIONS!



Mary Agnes and her son Daniel

- To Mary Agnes Murphy ('91 Chile/US) and Rick Laguatan for the arrival of their son Daniel on October 27.
- To David Raynor, Jr., son of Dave and Sharon ('82 Venezuela/US), and his wife on the occasion of their marriage in San Francisco on August 17.

- To Tom and Mercedes Bamat ('82 Ecuador/Brazil/US) on the arrival of their grandson, Orelio Manuel Bamat-Giron, born to Joseph Bamat and Ines Giron in Paris on November 13.



Joe Bamat and his son Orelio

Also, our sincere condolences to all Returned Missioners who have lost a loved one in recent months. Prayers have been posted on our MKLM intranet as well as in the Always A Missioner intranet for those we are aware of.

FRIENDS ACROSS BORDERS

A Promise Fulfilled



Tim O'Connell ('92 El Salvador/ US) with FAB trip participants

When my time with Maryknoll Lay Missioners in El Salvador ended in June of 2007 I told my Salvadoran friends I would return to visit. I hoped to do so, but wasn't sure how or when that would happen. Since then I have been privileged to return twice, both times as a guide for Friends Across Borders trips (December 2005 and July 2008).

It would have been wonderful to return to El Salvador for any reason, but being part of a MKLM sponsored trip made it all the better. We spent time with the Maryknoll Mission Community, visited old friends and new mission sites. I remembered things I had forgotten and learned new things as well.

What amazed me most was how much I enjoyed being with the trip participants. Their open minds, loving hearts and flexible dispositions made the trips fun and interesting. It is especially powerful to experience a place like El Salvador alongside people visiting for the first time.

I am grateful to Maryknoll Lay Missioners for helping me to keep the promise I made, and return to a country and people who continue to transform me. **Tim O'Connell '92**

ORIENTATION CLASS

The Kenya Trip Opened My Eyes

By Kathleen Dunford, '08 Kenya

Friends Across Borders was so instrumental in my discernment! I was "toying" with the idea of lay missionary work since 1993 when I saw a video on Mother Theresa and her work. I was struck by her person and passion for the poorest of the poor and dedication to God, but my children were in their early teens then.

But I kept the idea of medical mission in the back of my mind. I kept the faith and raised my children as a single parent. They are now productive citizens working in NYC and London.



Kathy learning dances in Kenya during FAB trip

The trip to Kenya itself was wonderful, especially meeting all the Maryknollers. All were very supportive, helpful and passionate about their work and living the reality of life with the poor. I found Curt and Anita Klueg ('03 Kenya) amazing with their mission work and young child!! The trip also showed me that a person could walk, serve and pray with the poor in far away lands and have a meaningful life - you could see this in their eyes and attitudes. Father Bill Vos ('79 Tanzania) and Vicki Simon ('98 Kenya/ US) were great guides. To have a member of the clergy and a lay missionary being a team was a revelation to me, something I had only witnessed in my adult re-encounter with my Catholic Faith, certainly not in the Church I knew as a child.

I knew then that if I applied to Maryknoll, I would find a second home of good, gentle people who care for others and believe in the mission of Jesus. Although it was not on the schedule, we were able to tour Fr. Bill Fryda's ('80 Tanzania, former MKLM) St. Mary Mission Hospital. Since I am a medical professional I found that very meaningful. Father Bill is a dynamic force for God and the poor. The other projects we visited were equally inspiring. Both in Mombasa and Nairobi and I was struck by the spirit of the Kenyan people. Despite their struggles - they were smiling and had hope. I felt hopeful for the future generations of Kenyan children. Especially concerning the AIDS epidemic and the education they were being given to prevent the disease.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2009

The 2008 elections are behind us. Thanks to all of you who wrote, called, downloaded or emailed for copies of our election materials. Over 20,000 copies of our voter reflection guide, "Loving our neighbor in a shrinking world," were distributed in English and in Spanish.

No matter the results of the election, our work for justice with peace is not done. It remains critically important to engage the new president and Congress on the foreign policy issues near and dear to Maryknollers' hearts that were rarely mentioned during the long election campaigns.

We encourage you to schedule an appointment with your members of the **House** and the **Senate** early in 2009 in your local area or to consider coming to visit them in Washington. Our office will soon have a number of resources available for you to use in engaging your representative and senators, whether they were re-elected or are new in office.

We especially encourage you to participate in **Ecumenical Advocacy Days (March 13-16, 2009)** here in Washington. For a PDF brochure, please **contact the Office:** <http://www.maryknollogc.org/about/index.htm>. This year's theme, "Enough for All Creation," complements not only the issues we raised in our 2008 reflection guide but also a new program our office will initiate in 2009 aimed at deepening our understanding of how faith, ecology and the global economy intersect. (Stay tuned for more information about that project in the new year.)

Homily Helps, written by Maryknollers and focused on the themes of our election guide, are still available, and will be posted through Inauguration Day (January 20, 2009).

Your participation and efforts have made the Maryknoll 2008 elections project a huge success. Thank you



CLASS OF 2008

11 new missionary candidates arrived on September 14 for the 2008 Orientation Program. They signed their contracts and made their covenants with MKLM on Thursday, December 11 during a lively but solemn Eucharistic Liturgy in the Bethany Chapel. The Joint Sending ceremony followed on Saturday the 13th in Queen of Apostles Chapel at the Seminary. **Claudia Chin** from Miami, FL and **Margaret (Peg) Vámosy** from Stamford, NY will serve in

East Timor, **Kathleen (Kathy) Dunford** from Monmouth Beach, NJ, **Patrick and Ilona Holz** from Benicia, CA will serve in Kenya, **Michelle Marie Goetz** from St. Mary of the Wood, IN and **Lauren Vater** from Bronx, NY will serve in the Andean Region, **Michele and George Otte** from Menlo Park, CA and **Richard Perez** from Danville, CA will serve in Tanzania, **Susan Sportl** from Gig Harbor, WA will serve in Cambodia/Vietnam.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

A Day Retreat in NYC

We are in our initial planning with the Good Shepherd Volunteers Volunteers and other international sending groups of a Day Retreat for Returned Missioners in the New York City area. We look at this day as an opportunity for international volunteers from various organizations to come together, share their stories and reflect on their experiences with each other as well as make new connections and friends.

At this moment there are two possible dates **Saturday, March 28th** or **Saturday, April 4th**. Please mark them in your calendar. We will include more details in the February e-newsletter.

REUNITE, REMINISCE AND RECONNECT

HERE AT BETHANY!

26th Anniversary Reunion Class of 1983

25th Anniversary Reunion Class of 1984

35th Anniversary Reunion Class of 1974

August 14 - 16, 2009

For more info contact **Cecilia** alwaysamissioner@mklm.org or 414-736-2268

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Reconnected to the privilege and gift that is mission **1**
- A half of my life in Tanzania **5**
- Telling the stories of many **5**
- He is not one of us! **6**
- Challenging and thoughtful **6**
- The Kenya trip opened my eyes **10**



Always A Missioner

a newsletter for MKLM Returned Missioners

Points of interest:

- Returned Missioners Highlights
- Updates Returned Missioners
- Special Goodbyes!
- Current and Returned Missioners' Children
- Current MKLM News
- Updates - Maryknoll Community
- Office for Global Concerns
- Calendar of Events and much more



The Lofgrens ('97 Bolivia) hiking in the West Coast mountains



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