



Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

May/June 2010

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PAUL D'ARCY

AWANDA WHITWORTH



Photo courtesy of Mary D'Arcy

Paul F. D'Arcy passed away on March 24, 2010. He lived a rich and varied life, dying at age 88. The Maryknoll Affiliates lost a founding member of the New York City Chapter—the one who gave the Chapter the name “Subway Chapter.”

Paul, who graduated from a Jesuit High school scholarship program at age 15, was an intellectual man. He thought deeply about issues of importance, the Catholic Church, the priesthood and about ethnic peoples around the world. He had a great zeal for life. As he aged he had many physical disabilities, but he never allowed those to diminish his joy in life. He loved his grandchildren with all his energy. Even as he became older, he would captivate them playing games with them and singing his incredibly fast rendition of “Rag-time Cowboy Joe.”

Paul traveled widely. He gave speeches in South Asia (Pakistan), Africa, Europe and South America. He was ordained a Maryknoll priest in 1946. He received a PhD in Psychology, which he put to good use in teaching and helping to train future priests for Maryknoll. He married in 1969. He was prominent in the field of Psychological screening for the priesthood. As one former Maryknoller wrote, “Paul was a wonderful, lovable and loving human being, who played a major role in Maryknoll’s *aggiornamento** and put a human face on important institutional change. Not a lot of folks could have worn that garment so well.” In many of the notes and letters from people who knew Paul, they said that he had touched their lives deeply. They noted how much he cared for friends and family, how many people he had taught and mentored, his intelligence, his curiosity and of course, his great sense of humor.

The loss to his family, his Affiliate Chapter, and to the many former and present Maryknollers has been profound. He will be deeply missed. His son Paul said, “His absence leaves a hole that can not be filled except maybe for one little hope, which is that some of his traits and humor will live on and resonate through his family and grandchildren.”

* The process of bringing an institution or organization up to date; modernization.

Maryknoll Affiliate **Awanda Marie Whitworth** (Houston Chapter) died on Palm Sunday, March 2, 2010, from complications following open heart surgery, at the age of 70. She is survived by her devoted husband of 49 years, **Charles Whitworth**, their six children, 20 grandchildren, and her eleven siblings.



Photo from Maryknoll Mission video

Awanda was a graduate of Texas A&M, where she met Charles while she was president of the Newman Club. After teaching elementary school in Mathis, Texas, she and Charles moved to Grand Prairie, TX, Birmingham, AL and finally to Houston TX in 1964. In Houston, she taught religious education. In the early 1990s, Awanda joined the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston as Director of Religious Education at St. Maximilian Church. She later worked for the Social Concerns Secretariat, heading the Parish Social Ministry and Catholic Campaign for Human Development Office.

In 1997, she joined the Maryknoll Mission Team in Houston, where she began her involvement in mission. A member of the Archdiocesan Mission Council since its inception, she collaborated diligently with the Education Committee. She served for many years with enthusiasm and dedication on the Texas Mission Council in different leadership capacities, including chairperson. She was the acting secretary at the time of her death.

Social justice was a life-long commitment for Awanda. She was active with the Inter-Ethnic Forum and the Houston Immigration and Refugee Coalition. She initiated the Teen Summit for Race Relations, bringing together hundreds of high school students each year with the purpose of fostering greater racial understanding. Awanda was a member of the board of the Houston Peace and Justice Center, creating the Ecology Committee. Together with her husband Charles, she volunteered on a regular basis at the Houston Catholic Worker (Casa Juan Diego), also helping to get houses for immigrants started in Guatemala.

Whether taking her children on mission trips to Mexico or organizing Peace Camps for her grandchildren to teach them

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UPCOMING MARYKNOLL AFFILIATE EVENTS

about peaceful conflict resolution, Awanda exemplified her values and character for the benefit of her family.

Another facet of her life of service was her ministry to homeless and abused women. Supporting the efforts of the Dominican Sisters of Houston, she was one of their first and most dedicated volunteers in the early days of Wellspring Village.

With her husband Charles, she co-founded Santa Soledad retreat house in the countryside of Central Texas, making the setting available to numerous groups involved in social justice for their meetings and retreats free of charge. Also in tandem with her husband, she supported various worldwide charities, such as the works of the Vietnamese Dominican Sisters in Vietnam, the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus in Nigeria, the Wildflower House in Thailand, and the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers in Namibia.

She was a member of various organizations, such as the First Friday Forum, the Summer Institute of the University of St. Thomas, Pax Christi and Stop (Nuclear Mining in Kleberg County), among others.

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You can read more about Paul D’Arcy and see some pictures of him on our website (www.maryknollaffiliates.org).

Doing a [search on Google](#) for Awanda Whitworth turns up many of the activities in which she was involved.

Western Regional Conference – July 16 – 18, 2010, University of San Diego

The theme for the Western Regional is “Peacebuilding In Our Communities: Listening, Responding.” The keynote Speakers will be **Rev. John Dear, SJ** and **Sister Janice McLaughlin, MM**. [See our website for details.](#)

2011 Maryknoll Affiliate Conference – Companions on the Journey, Celebrating the Maryknoll Affiliate Vision – June 23 – 26, 2011, Passionist Spiritual Center, Riverdale, New York

A central focus will be celebrating our 20 years as a movement. Watch here and on our website for more information and plan to come!

OTHER EVENTS

NACAR Conference - June 4 - 10, 2010, St. Louis

The North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR) biennial Conference theme is “Leaven for the World: Associates & Religious Together.” For the latest information and to register visit the NACAR website at <http://www.nacar96.org/>.

2010 Annual Mission Congress - October 28-31, 2010, Albuquerque, New Mexico

God’s Mission, Many Faces: A Portrait of U.S. Catholics in Mission. See uscatholicmission.org for details.

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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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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Our centerpiece for this edition of *Not So Far Afield* is immigration. Our Mission Statement states: “Maryknoll Affiliates challenge one another to witness to mission as a way of life by going beyond borders, locally and globally...” No issue reflects this more than immigration. As our brothers and sisters around the world literally cross the borders of our nation states, we are called to bridge the borders of misunderstanding between peoples and cultures. The following articles represent just a few of the efforts of Maryknoll Affiliates to walk with those who have left their land for one that is unfamiliar and hostile but that may hold hope and opportunity.



IMMIGRATION REFORM, “YES WE CAN”

Charlie Reilly – San Diego
Photos by Mark Day

Wow, yesterday health reform was approved by the House and today, immigration reform! Well, not yet reformed, but my wife, Marta, and I just joined fifty or sixty people outside Representative Brian Bilbray’s 50th District office in Southern California to tell our “what-part-of-illegal-don’t-you-understand” anti-immigrant Congressman we want immigration reform, not raids. Many of the Immigration Reform posters were carried by Hispanics, others by Anglos, including Protestants, Catholics and Maryknoll Affiliates. A week before, Marta, accompanied by our parish Hispanic Ministry director visited Bilbray’s office to inquire about bills the Congressman, a border wall advocate, intended to propose or support on immigration reform. His district supervisor, a former law enforcement officer, evaded our questions. The bottom line was that the Congressman would side-step this issue as was done by anti-health reform proponents. If immigration reform this electoral year is unlikely, is there at least a chance for an honest debate about the issues and suspension of draconian measures, round-ups and deportations while we make up our minds?

With fellow parishioners, we’d recently completed a three-week course in advocacy and lobbying organized by “Justice Overcoming Borders,” a San Diego member of the Gamaliel

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Immigration reform protest at Congressman Brian Bilbray’s office in Solana Beach, California. Day laborer Raul Magana, a native of Guadalajara, Jalisco, with Marta and Charlie Reilly.

network and the “Reform Immigration for America” national coalition. That coalition’s march of tens of thousands on Washington March 20, 2010, although eclipsed by the House vote on health care, was energized by phrases like “yes we can”/“si se puede”—refrains seldom heard over the past 14 months. Groups of labor unions, faith-based organizations, and university students met in Los Angeles late February to strategize with Chicago’s Congressman Luis Gutierrez and plan the march. He had already submitted a comprehensive reform proposal in the House and has been leading the struggle while leaning on his friend the President to make good on campaign promises to fix broken immigration law. Health care preempted immigration, while the militarized machinery of workplace and neighborhood raids, border walls, GPS shackles, deportations of husbands, wives and even children, created a pall of fear—especially, but not only in the Southwest.

The forces against immigrants are strong, well-financed, and often rabid (as they have been throughout our history). The Catholic Bishops biblical plea to “welcome the strangers” has met with indifference, if not opposition, even in Catholic parishes. Choices will have to be made. Are we defensive Americans first, then Catholics, or are we Catholics first, then inclusive Americans? The Sermon on the Mount and Catholic Social Teaching seem pretty clear on where priorities should lie.

Just three days before the health care reform vote, Democratic Senator Charles Schumer and Republican Lindsey Graham announced in the Washington Post the outline of a proposed reform bill entitled “The Right Way to Mend Immigration”. It was somewhat vague, with punitive overtones that will engender much debate, but netted an endorsement from President Obama and dared to fill the void of bipartisan initiatives for anything—least of all the hot button cluster of immigration issues. Achieving some measure of justice through immigration reform seems an uphill climb that would make a 21st century Sisyphus quit—but then, what were the Beatitudes all about?

Ever wonder what documents Mary and Joseph showed when they passed through customs at the Egyptian border? Was there an official there who said, “you two can come through, but leave the kid behind, Herod will take care of him.” Or was there a quota at that border that readily accepted mathematicians and magi but said “no carpenters needed”?

Can we have serious debate? Immigration is a global challenge. The webs of poverty and possibilities, of development and hopelessness, of arms races, wars and unfair trade, of human trafficking and deportation, of raids and family unification are all complicated. Positions are established, contradictions multiply—and human faces get blurred. Immigration numbers are pulled out of a hat, quotas are dreamed up, and lines of applicants grow increasingly long. Meanwhile, who, if not Hispanic youth, will contribute to the Social Security of indifferent or rabid anti-immigrant Gringos? David Hayes Bautista, a prominent scholar on Hispanic demographic trends in the U.S., finds that every three seconds, a Hispanic youth reaches 18. It’s time to register young voters!

The challenges facing our legislators are indeed enormous. But those facing us Christians, followers of Jesus, as we try to respond to “God’s nobodies”, surely puts us squarely before immigration reform. Do Americans really think that the migrant farmers who pick our strawberries here in San Diego would not prefer to remain in Oaxaca if they could get a decent job there? Do we really think that NAFTA or CAFTA improved chances for Mexican and Central American farmers—and that it was not crafted in favor of U.S. multinationals? Yes, there are limits to our nation’s absorptive capacity—but none of us has a clear idea what those limits are. Yes, there’s a pull toward an America of dreams, but there’s a more desperate push that brings people here, often to be exploited. Some call for justice, some push rule of law, and everyone knows laws can be changed!

There was occasionally a welcome for immigrant brawn and brains that opened successive chapters in American history. Now we confuse terror with migration. Given the economic demands for immigrant labor, why blame immigrants? When will employers get fined or arrested for illegal hiring and illegal wage levels?

Today, our local congressman watches drivers drive well over the speed limit on the I-5 highway near his office, yet he only asks: “what part of illegal do you and the undocumented not understand?” This Congressman just approved another \$2,775 billion in military aid to the Israeli defense force. Meanwhile, Israel flaunts American interests, persecutes Palestinians, snubs our President and Vice-president, ignores legal United Nations-drawn boundaries, steals Palestinian land and illegally fires American-donated white phosphorous shells that burned Palestinian civilians in Gaza. What part of “illegal” don’t we and our Congress understand?

Might this dysfunctional Congress recover? Might assertive American Catholics and Maryknoll Affiliates get more en-



gaged, giving Congress some serious marching orders on comprehensive immigration reform? As Eliseo Medina, vice-president of the Service Employees International Union told us, “Two things move Congress: money and numbers. We have the numbers. Yes we can.”

Follow the debates. Let your Congressmen and women hear from you. Be assured that the anti-immigrant people are well-organized and very vocal. As Senator Boxer’s staff told us, “we get a hundred calls from the anti’s to every one of yours.” Take a hard look at military budgets approved in your name, with this year’s taxes. Decide whether and when violence has engendered anything but more violence. Double check the Beatitudes to recall where Jesus stood, not just on empires and wars, but also on immigrants. And check out Barack Obama’s résumé—he used to work as an organizer for the *Gamaliel Foundation*.

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IN THE DARK: UNDERSTANDING THE LIFE OF THE UNDOCUMENTED

Kristin Neufeld – Auburn, NY

What is it like to be an undocumented worker in this country? I think I know—but only a little.

Twice a week, I drive 20 miles to a local dairy farm that hires undocumented workers. I make my way through mud and debris to a dilapidated two-bedroom structure that houses six to eight Guatemalan men. Sometimes they have heat, but often the furnace is out-of-order, close to inhumane in upstate New York winters. Ironically, in summer, there are no screens on the curtainless windows, opened to relieve the heat but admitting flies, bees, and—at night, hundreds of mosquitos. There are a few electrical outlets in the rooms I have seen, but the majority of them don’t work. And so there are power strips and extension cords everywhere. It is a catastrophe waiting to happen! In the tiny kitchen, stove burners have long stopped working, with the exception of one that is crusted over from years of use. The oven, of course, is useless. There is running water in the sink—literally—because it’s impossible to turn it off.

One of my students sleeps in a closet, the only space he can claim for himself. He, like his companions, works six days a week, from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM., with 45 minutes off for lunch and supper, intervals during which he must first cook what he wants to eat. On his day off, he has a few options: doing his laundry (no dryer), trying to learn English, and watching TV. He, like his companions, has a bike for transportation, but no one to go anywhere with him. He and his co-workers pay the farmer \$25 a week rent for living in the house but work for minimum wage, with no overtime.

Such is the life of the undocumented worker.

When I knock on the door, whoever is inside opens it just a crack and then smiles and says, "Hello, teacher!" In this beautiful part of New York State, he lives in fear and in squalor. Last year, the best friend of one of my students got picked up by immigration officers while he was trying to buy food at Walmart. Thrown into jail for three nights, he finally was bailed out by a "pastor" who paid the \$5000 needed for his release. Now he is working pretty much for nothing. While he is repaying the \$5000, he is no longer able to send any money home to his wife and baby daughter. Eventually, he will be deported. I asked him, "What will you do then?" to which he replied, "I have no choice; I will try to come back."

Last week, Immigrations picked up two more of my students in the bus station in Syracuse. They were attempting to relocate to California, where a friend had promised the husband a job in a warmer climate and which paid better than a dairy-worker salary. Hugo is now trying to find work anywhere to pay back the \$5000 another "pastor" posted for his release, and then he, too, will be deported, leaving behind Hortensia, who is 6 months pregnant with her first baby. No one knows where she is, but wherever she is, she is totally dependent on others, with only the three months' worth of English that I have tried to give her.

Our country is fueled by immigrant labor, but there is no question that our immigration system is badly broken. As I write this, there are approximately 12 million undocumented immigrants living in the US. They work long hours at jobs that no one else wants and, like my English students, live in conditions we would not accept for our household pets.



The problems of our country—unemployment, crime, substance abuse, bank bailouts, collapse of automobile industries, etc.—are not caused by immigrants. The jobs they do—working at monotonous, dirty, sometimes dangerous tasks—are not jobs that any but the most desperate and stoic American would even try. I hold little hope that, in my lifetime, I will see legislation that is just and creative and that will truly "welcome the stranger."

EFFORTS FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM IN PHILADELPHIA

Paul W. Witte – Philadelphia

I arrived in Philadelphia in July 2009, after ten years of working with immigrants in Tennessee and Kentucky under the auspices of the Glenmary Home Missioners. I left Kentucky, where I had been for 6 of those 10 years, with sadness, letting everyone know that I was not abandoning them. Since most of the immigrants in that part of Kentucky were undocumented, my leaving meant they were losing an advocate and a defender in a place where such people were hard to find. I told everyone that though I would be far away, I would continue to work for immigration reform.

Immigration reform, if it is achieved, will not be the end of the travail of undocumented immigrants, but it may offer them hope towards getting out of the deep hole that they have been pushed into since 2001. The majority of immigrants I know are good, hard working folk from the rural areas of Mexico, Guatemala, San Salvador, Honduras and elsewhere. The faith and family values they bring with them to western Kentucky have been slowly but surely winning over the farmers and country folk of that rural state. Native Kentuckians who have gotten to know and appreciate the Mexicans pleaded with me to help them do something so their new-found Mexican friends or employees could "get legal." Sadly it fell to me to have to tell them that there was no way to achieve this unless we changed the system.

Today, in Philadelphia, what we are doing to bring about comprehensive immigration reform will affect not only local immigrants but immigrants spread all over this country of ours. There are a number of local initiatives happening with which I am connected. Most directly I am involved with the *New Sanctuary Movement*. Another organization, *Reform Immigration for America*, has, in my experience, done effective organizing to promote comprehensive immigration reform.

First, let me talk about the *New Sanctuary Movement* (NSM). Many will remember the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s. Locally several faith groups were committed to opening up their doors and hearts to people from Central America fleeing political persecution. St. Vincent de Paul Church in the Germantown section of Philadelphia was one of those faith groups. Gene Cleaver, a fellow member of the Peace and Justice Ministry of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Germantown, told me about the NSM and about Peter Pedemonti and Jen Rock who were heading up its local chapter.

The NSM is a national organization. In Philadelphia, the NSM is waging a locally tailored campaign on behalf of undocumented immigrants. Taking its cue from the plight of Philadelphia-area immigrants, NSM has taken on several projects:

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1. Opposition to the Philadelphia Police Department's Secure Communities program
2. The Storytelling Campaign
3. Know Your Rights trainings
4. The Immigration Forum series

"Philadelphia has taken immigration enforcement into its own hands. The Philadelphia Police Department is collaborating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through a program ironically named *Secure Communities*. As a result of this collaboration, people face deportation for infractions as small as running a stop sign. The program cultivates distrust of police, escalates fear in immigrant communities, violates human rights, and encourages racial profiling.

"In an effort to empower those affected by *Secure Communities*, NSM recently launched a Storytelling Campaign in coalition with *JUNTOS* and the *Philadelphia Storytelling Project*. This initiative seeks to curtail the collaboration of the Philadelphia Police Department with ICE by sharing immigrants' perspective of this harmful partnership. With storytelling circles developing across the city in Latino, Indonesian, and Arabic communities, people are recording their experiences, analyzing them in the context of the broader problem, and constructing a strategy to use these stories to stop *Secure Communities* in Philadelphia. The participants recognize the power and influence of their own voice in this process, thus transforming their fear into a unified and powerful movement.

"NSM seeks to increase awareness of this issue by further educating immigrant and non-immigrant communities. *Know Your Rights* trainings continue to equip immigrants with tools necessary to defend their rights in the event of a traffic stop, raid, or work conflict" (From a NSM letter to supporters).

Immigration Forums are held at churches, synagogues or other venues where there is openness to hearing more on the need for immigration reform. One such forum recently featured presentations from NSM partner families about their immigration struggles. Their experiences convey the human side of the current system, and the sharing of these stories creates a bond of understanding and commitment across communities.

The New Sanctuary Movement can be reached at this address: 4404 North 5th St, Philadelphia PA 19140. Email: nsphiladelphia@gmail.com. Coalition members meet monthly at Visitation BMV Church in North Philadelphia. Ongoing working groups do such things as educate the community and accompany immigrants in detention and their families.

Just a word about *Reform Immigration for America*, a national organization headed up locally by Ali Kronley. Since I have been in Philadelphia, I have attended several rallies coordinated by Ali. One at the Philadelphia City Hall called for adoption of a city council resolution regarding immigration reform; another one on Columbus Day outside City Hall



was attended by 200 people. Last month 500 plus people jammed St. Thomas Aquinas parish hall in South Philadelphia for a rally followed by a candlelight procession and prayer service. Ali recently organized a march to the office of a local congressman asking him to sponsor the Gutierrez Bill in Congress for immigration reform. All these events were well publicized and covered by the media.

Since the health care bill was passed in Congress, attention has turned to immigration reform. It began with a bang when two hundred thousand showed up in Washington on March 21. It was heartening to us who remember the heartbreak we felt in July 2007, when the Kennedy-McCain bill was set aside and debate on immigration reform postponed indefinitely. With the introduction of a new bill sponsored by Senators Schumer of New York and Graham of South Carolina, we have a new start. It begins what inevitably will be a long process of heated discussion and compromise. Our Pennsylvania senator, Arlen Specter, likes to talk about the "grand compromise" that will produce new and sorely needed immigration legislation. A group of us from the *Justice for Immigrants Campaign* here in Philadelphia went to our Senators' local offices to present the essential elements the Catholic Bishops consider necessary for just reform. On April 11, my wife and I attended a rally at Constitution Plaza in Philadelphia sponsored by several different groups including the *New Sanctuary Movement*. Such rallies will be happening throughout the country at an increasing rate in coming months. I should say they need to happen. We need to continue pushing for comprehensive immigration reform because the opposing anti-immigrant forces are also organized for the big push. We need to push hard to keep America a nation based on immigrants. Immigrants are the greatness of our country. Without them we are nothing.

Artwork from *Illustrating Our Solidarity*
 First edition, December 2008.
 Compilation of artwork by Lee Miller

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A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE

Ann Coady - Twin Cities

I've been around immigrants all my life. As a child, I have vivid memories of visiting grandparents "up north", immigrants from Finland, who lived in a community where their heritage was very much alive. They even sent us to camp to learn of the economic cooperative system common in their home country and replicated in countless ways on the Iron Range in Minnesota.

As a young adult recently returned from a stint in the Peace Corps in Colombia, I longed to go back to the developing world, but things kept getting in the way... my husband studying for state boards, a sick child, an aging parent in need of assistance, a new baby. I felt I was living in a limbo, waiting to return someday, living life on hold. Then a phone call changed my perspective. Someone from the local St. Vincent de Paul chapter had to make a call on a family that spoke only Spanish, recent immigrants from El Salvador, and asked if I would go along to interpret. After that, word got out into the community that there was someone who understood their language and their needs and was willing to help. The phone started ringing off the hook.

At the time I was a "stay at home" mom, waiting for the domestic duties to lighten up. It got to the point that our youngest child, who was just learning to talk, would speak in English words to us, but when talking on the toy telephone, would only speak Spanish.

One day, I called the local school district to try to help a newly arrived family enroll their child in school. The district had just received a state grant to establish an outreach program to serve its lower income residents. The director I spoke with offered to hire me on the spot! Thus began a twenty-five year career with the Port Washington schools in New York, helping mostly immigrant families negotiate systems, access resources and generally integrate into the culture of the school district. During that period we went through different waves of immigration, with students arriving from Central America, Ecuador, Chile, and later Turkey and the Middle East. It's the Salvadorans, I remember, whose children arrived so traumatized by the war there that when they heard a car backfire they would dive under the bed or any available furniture.

One of the highlights of that experience was setting up a family camp, so that parents and children who could not afford a vacation could spend a week together in beautiful Harriman State Park. I was also invited by a group of Turkish businessmen to tour their country at their expense, along with a few colleagues, and to experience their wonderful hospitality in an attempt at mutual understanding. The following year I was invited by an Indian American colleague, who had gone with us to Turkey, to accompany her as she returned to her country to announce to her extended family that she would eschew an arranged marriage in favor of a love match with an Italian-American! (The news was not particularly well received, but change is never easy). One of the greatest satisfactions for me was, toward the end of my tenure, helping



to fill out the college financial aid forms for the very students I had helped to register as preschoolers!

A few years ago, with the nest empty and an extended family calling, we packed up and moved to the Midwest. I fully expected that my adventures with the immigrant population were behind me, but the Twin Cities I had left in my twenties was not the Twin Cities to which I returned! My mother had moved into an assisted living situation and many of her "assistants" were Liberian and Somali, part of the largest Somali community outside of Somalia. I will be forever grateful for the wonderful and respectful way they took care of her. Our local Farmer's Market is filled with stalls of the most delicious vegetables raised by Hmong farmers, also part of a large community of Laotian "hill tribe" peoples who fought alongside U.S. soldiers in that undeclared war during the Vietnam conflict and then faced annihilation when the war was lost. They were granted refugee status in the U.S. if they could find sponsors. Many church groups in this area answered the call.

I decided to volunteer as a Guardian ad Litem* in the Juvenile Courts in Minnesota, where all children involved in the court system because of abuse or neglect have such an advocate. After undergoing extensive training, I was assigned my first case: a Spanish speaking young girl who was brought to this country as a victim of human trafficking. I learned that there is a vibrant community of Mexican immigrants in St. Paul where I volunteer. Minnesota is the end of the migrant trail—sugar beets are the last crop to be harvested. Some decided to stay the winter and look for work, and many families have been here for generations. I am now working with Mexican foster parents who are getting ready to adopt two little girls of Mexican heritage. This couple is poor by most standards, and not at all young, but they fell in love with these little girls and have been encouraged by their own adult children to take this on, with the promise of support from the extended family.

I then decided to seek part-time employment in a rural free clinic that was getting started in River Falls, Wisconsin. A couple of months after opening, someone brought a Mexican laborer to the clinic. I had not even known of their existence, but dairy farmers in the area who are trying to hold on to their family farms, facing competition from the big agribusi-

* A guardian appointed to represent the interests of a person with respect to a single action in litigation.

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ness companies, are hiring Mexicans to do the work done by larger families in generations past. Word got out into the community that there is someone at the free clinic who understands their language and their needs and is willing to help. We are at the point now where we need to assign a Spanish interpreter for every clinic session.

No, I never did get back to the developing world, except to visit. I opened my eyes and the developing world seemed to come to me, and I am all the richer for it. Yes, I have been around immigrants all my life. So have all of us who live in the U.S. Maybe we have to scratch a generation or two, but there they are, building up this country and keeping it vibrant. I would not want it any other way.



RESOURCES ON IMMIGRATION

Be sure to add your own resources and join in a discussion on immigration on the [discussion board](#) on our website and/or on our [Facebook page](#).

Crossing Borders: Migration, Theology, and the Human Journey, a JustMatters module justfaith.org/programs/just-matters-m_crossingborders.html.

Family Bedtime Stories: Exploring our Scriptural and Spiritual Heritage - Major Migration Stories by Penny Robinson. Available at www.maryknollaffiliates.org/downloads/catview/182-global-concerns/226-immigration.html.

For You Were Once A Stranger: Immigration in the U.S. Through the Lens of Faith, This comprehensive resource provides historical background, the faith perspective on immigration, and suggestions for taking action in your community. Published Spring 2007 by Interfaith Worker Justice. It can be downloaded from: www.iwj.org/index.cfm/immigration.

Immigration Myths and Facts from the Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service www.lirs.org/atf/cf/%7BA9DDBA5E-C6B5-4C63-89DE-91D2F09A28CA%7D/mythbuster.pdf.

Migration and our Catholic Response from USCCB website section Catholics Confront Global Poverty www.usccb.org/sdwp/globalpoverty/ccgp_migration.shtml.

Strangers in the Land: A six-week guide on immigration, the church, and the bible. By the Editors of Sojourners magazine store.sojo.net/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=SG_SITL&Click=1324 or call 1-800-714-7474.

The War at Home: Focus on Immigration a 12-page resource published Summer 2009 www.paxchristiusa.org/newsletters/

[June2009NewsletterWeb.pdf](#).

Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity, Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops. Available from www.usccb.org/mrs/unity.shtml.

WEBSITES

- *Border Action Network*: www.borderaction.org
- *Christians for Comprehensive Immigration Reform*: faithandimmigration.org.
- *Gamaliel Foundation*: www.gamaliel.org
- *Humane Borders*: www.humaneborders.org
- *Justice for Immigrants*: www.justiceforimmigrants.org
- *Justice Overcoming Boundaries*: www.justicesandiego.org
- *Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns - Migrants*: www.maryknollogc.org/social/migrants.htm
- *New Sanctuary Movement*: www.newsanctuarymovement.org
- *Reform Immigration for America*: www.reformimmigrationforamerica.org
- *USCCB Migration and Refugee Services*: www.usccb.org/mrs/
- *The War at Home: Immigration*: resources on immigration from Pax Christi USA and their partners www.paxchristiusa.org/news_Events_more.asp?id=1520

OTHER RESOURCES

Houston Catholic Worker (Casa Juan Diego) articles on immigration: www.cjd.org/paper/gration.html.

Immigration Reform, Ray Suarez on the website "Destination Casa Blanca", with video: www.hitn.org/dcb/blog/2010/04/19/immiraion_reform.

Facing Deportation: facingdeportation.org. Families Impacted by North Carolina's Immigration Policies : A series of videos. This site is a professional thesis project completed by Eileen Mignoni in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Pax Christi An Immigrant's Prayer cards. The text from their prayer cards can be downloaded from www.paxchristiusa.org/prayercardtexts.pdf. The Pax Christi online store is under renovation until August 1, 2010.

Dying to Live and One Body One Border: Two videos from the Center for Latino Spirituality and Culture at the University of Notre Dame. See dyingtolive.nd.edu and oneborderonebody.nd.edu.

Roots of Migration from Witness for Peace (www.witnessforpeace.org).

There are two videos and two PowerPoint presentations, among other materials on immigration on the [Maryknoll Affiliate website](#). Do a search for immigration to find them.

**ILLEGAL A MUST READ FOR IMMIGRATION
ADVOCATES
HOW DID OUR IMMIGRATION SYSTEM BECOME SO
BROKEN?**

Penny Robinson – Fox Cities

With an immigration system crying out for reform, one has to ask, “How did this happen?” “Why so many?” Who would leave his homeland, his family, his friends—all that he has ever known—to come to this strange land to live in the shadows always afraid of being arrested and deported? Who would risk death in the treacherous deserts and rivers in search of a menial job or two or three? Who would seek being held in contempt by the community or exploited by unscrupulous employers?

In his new book, *Illegal*, Peter Geniesse answers these questions and more. His meticulous research is interspersed with personal stories of real immigrants. “Just why did millions of Mexicans and other Hispanics come to the U.S. in droves? Why now?” They weren’t criminals. “They were desperate people.

Over the years Geniesse has traveled throughout Mexico, learned to speak Spanish, and connected with many of the locals. In early 2009, he joined a couple of *Witness for Peace* delegations, one to Oaxaca, Mexico, where he stayed with a family in an indigenous village, and another delegation at the Altar crossroads, the staging area for thousands of migrants who leave for the deserts and mountains for America. He concluded that experience with a solidarity march of more than seven miles along the migrant trail in 115-degree temperatures.

People have been migrating from place to place since time began. In almost every book of the Jewish Testament, we read migration stories. Today it’s worldwide phenomenon, with an estimated 200 million people on the go. Many are refugees, others are internally displaced; but an estimated 40 million migrants are without legal documents.

“About one-third of the world’s undocumented live and work in the U.S. The vast majority are Hispanics, and most of those are Mexicans. About 11% of everyone born in Mexico is currently living in the US. That’s 12.7 million Mexican immigrants, and 55% don’t have legal papers. The Mexican migration is the largest flow of people in the world.”

Geniesse contends that the massive surge of Mexican immigrants was brought about by a sudden increase in poverty, and he blames the US. government in large part for the root causes. He traces this bully relationship back 160 years when the U.S. sent troops to Mexico City to get its way, and then annexed one third of the country’s territory and called it “manifest destiny.”

When the U.S. needed help to harvest the crops during both World War I and World War II, it recruited million of Mexicans. When we didn’t need them, they were deported. The Bracero program, which employed generations of Mexicans

until the mid-1960s, became a family tradition in some locations.

Geniesse then goes on to discuss the central issues around the immigration situation today. They are:

- Government Debt – “Structural Adjustments”
- NAFTA
- Drug Wars
- Globalization

Interspersed among the history lessons and statistics are real

stories of real human beings: Rosa, whose husband was an innocent victim of the drug wars; Rogelio, who lost his best friend in the desert; Ernesto, who lost his farm; and Enrique, who was deported after a workplace raid. Geniesse also reports on the heart-breaking raid in Postville, Iowa, by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE).

Many agree with Geniesse that comprehensive immigration reform is an urgent priority that needs to be addressed by Congress. He suggests a fairness doctrine that includes at least seven principles:

- *Temporary worker program*
- *Broad-based legalization*
- *Smart and humane enforcement*
- *Detention reform*
- *Restoration of due process protections*
- *Addressing root causes of migration*

Illegal is a highly readable, carefully researched explanation of the root causes of our current immigration situation. The stories of real people make it personal. This is a great primer for advocates of immigration reform, whether you already know a lot or whether you’re just learning.

“Peter A. Geniesse, 71, a native of Green Bay, WI, and a 1960 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, worked as a reporter and editor for several newspapers over the past four decades, traveling extensively throughout Mexico and Third World countries on writing assignments. His articles have appeared in numerous national publications. His first book, *Cuc: Flower of the Delta*, about Vietnamese refugees, was published in 2004” (iUniverse).

Illegal is available from the publisher, iUniverse.com, an affiliate of Barnes and Noble, or from most bookstores on order for the list price of \$17.95 plus shipping and handling. It also is available directly from the author at the discounted total price of \$15. Contact Peter A. Geniesse, 1040 S. Park Ave., Neenah, WI 54956, or by e-mail: Pjgeniesse@aol.com.

You can read Penny’s complete review at:

www.maryknollaffiliates.org/global-concerns/resources/item/9-illegal-nafta-refugees-forced-to-flee.html



PRISON POETRY

Jo Albright – NYC Subway Chapter

Vonunette and I have known each other since 2006 but only through correspondence. And not e-mail, but snail mail, as Vonunette is an inmate in the Jessup Maryland Women's Correctional Institution. While there, she has developed a strong interest in writing as therapy. Through the International Women's Writers Guild's program Writers Inside, I began what has become a most satisfying relationship and an understanding of what it is like to be incarcerated. Vonunette has special qualities for a woman living under trying circumstances and making the best of it. Neither do I know what her crime was nor does it matter. What does matter is how she is living her life. I have sent her postcards from my travels, which she always appreciates, considering the impossibility of her going anywhere now. She is sympathetic to my challenges and I have tried to encourage her through her disappointments—for example, when the judge made a mistake in her sentencing and then had to add on two years. Since last May, she has been waiting for the judge to set a new court date.

While in prison, besides writing poetry, which I find exceptional, she quilts to benefit needy families. She does research about her own case and helps other women with their legal work. While she cannot use the internet, she has access to a library and asks me to send her information from the web. Lastly, she has a job in the Prison to Work Career Center, helping others to transition from incarceration to employment,

This past December, she graduated from cosmetology school but was disappointed because no members of her family could make the ceremony held during working hours. She wished me happy holidays, admitting she was homesick and praying she gets a court date soon because she has been waiting so long.

P.S. She just wrote that an editor of a magazine wants to publish her poems!



Some things

Vonunette Allen 2009

Some things just don't make any sense
I sense that some things never will
Yet I sit with the unanswered.

Looking into the mirrored wall of memories
I see the reflections of yesterdays
Will the pain of love lost fade away with the rain
Or am I on a crash course with a run away train

I hear your thoughts without you being close
You finish my sentences even though I haven't spoken a sound
I know if I was by your side everything would be okay
Some things just weren't meant to happen today
In this still silence my heart touches the ground.

Some things just don't make any sense
I sense that some things never will
So still I sit with the unanswered.

The music of our love still keeps me in tune
To all that we had and the sweet melody embraces me and lulls me
We are prisoners to the lyrics of the heart
The strings of my heart harp are out of tune and the melody
Knows no boundaries or what to say
To keep me from hitting the endless bottom of my soul

I replay the days of laughter
Laughter's echo hides behind my pain filled tears
I hear your voice my mouth moves and no voice is heard
Your laughter fades into tantrums and taunts
I will not bend nor break at least not yet
Still I know if I were by your side everything would be okay
Some things just weren't meant to happen today
Tears mix with the paint to paint the picture of my fears

Some things just don't make sense
I sense that some things never will
Still I sit with the unanswered

I've been pushed too hard and too far
I am not the easy target for your play practice
Drowning and drained of all the emotion that
I was never able to share with you
I cry silent tears and somehow fall asleep
Shadows of rest filled slumber toss me like
A ship tossed in the waves of the storm
Some things just don't make sense
I sense some things never will
I will
Push the envelope to answer the unknown
I am a fighter a giver a lover a friend
I am a woman a daughter who will love you till
The very end

Some things just don't make sense
I sense some things never will...

NEWS FROM THE KNOLL

Maryknoll Lay Missioners and the Future of Mission

Maryknoll Lay Missioner **Joe Regotti** and **Sam Stanton** attended a meeting on collaboration among six lay mission-sending organizations. During the meeting, they formed a committee that will approach church leadership, hierarchy, religious, and laity to gain support for and understanding of the role of laity in the future of mission.

Sam, the Executive Director of the Lay Missioners, also attended the board meeting of the US Catholic Mission Association (USCMA). During the meeting, Sister Madge Karecki, Director of Missions in the Archdiocese of Chicago, led a reflection on the Aparecida documents of the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM). This is a broad-based pastoral plan for Latin America that also identifies challenges faced by church and society in Latin America today. Sam highly recommends reading it.

Maryknoll in Chile

Chile suffered an earthquake of great magnitude on February 27 of this year. Maryknoll has a long history in Chile. All the Maryknoll Lay Missioners, Sisters and Society Members are doing fine, but are struggling with the impact to their neighbors, especially those living in the Maule Region, where the earthquake caused the most damage.

Maryknoll Lay Missioner Cecilia Espinoza, who is from Chile, was there at the time of the earthquake with university students from the United States. Cecilia and all the students were also unharmed. The Maryknoll Lay Missioners and Sisters have posted updates on their websites, including ways to assist.

Maryknoll Sisters Celebrate Their Jubilee

Noel Doescher MM & Mary Ellen Manz MM

Jubilee resounded in hearts and voices as the Eden Community celebrated the Jubilees of eight of their members at a beautiful Mass on February 7th. **Elenita Barry**, at 102 still setting records, celebrated an amazing 85 years as a Maryknoll Sister. **Miriam Regis Boudreau**, **Mary McCormick**, **Antonetta Wilgenbusch**, and **Cecilia Ruggiero** celebrated 75 years; **Agnes McKeirnan** and **Dorothy Rubner**, 70 years; and our "Youngster," **Nancy Donovan**, 60 years.

18 other Sisters celebrated their jubilees on February 14. Sisters **Joan Chatfield**, **Dolores Congdon**, **Rose Lauren Earl**, **Eileen Franz**, **Roseann Hanley**, **Reina Paz Kakilala**, **Mary Ellen Manz**, **Louise Notaro**, **Jessie Poynton**, **Patricia Redmond**, **Patricia Ring**, and **Katherine Taepke** celebrated 60 years. The 70 year Jubilarians were **Sisters Ann Catherine Ryan**, **Vivian Votruba** and **Mary Naab**. The Diamond Jubilarians were: **Sisters Antonetta Wilgenbusch** and **Cecilia Ruggiero**. Last but not least, celebrating her 80th Anniversary, was **Sister Virginia Flagg**.

Miriam Center for Migrant Workers Presented at the UN

In preparation for the 48th Session of the Commission for Social Development, the Committee for Social Development, with the collaboration of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, initiated an online survey of NGOs to find best practices of Social Integration/Inclusion in the Fall of 2009. 190 responses from 62 countries were received. Out of these responses Miriam Center for Migrant Workers was chosen as one of the fourteen examples to be used for advocacy purposes.

Miriam Center was started in 2004 to help migrant women from the Philippines, Vietnam and other countries who work in Korea or who have married into Korean families. It began as an offshoot of the Korean Catholic Women's Committee for the New World (KCWC). **Sisters Numeriana (Norie) Mojado** and **Patricia (Pat) Norton** and some leaders of KCWC were its founding members.

Haiti Report

Joseph Veneroso MM

About 50 Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers Sisters, Affiliates and employees gathered on March 8 to hear Fr. Romane St. Vil and Fr. Dennis Moorman speak about their recent humanitarian trip to Haiti.

In Haiti, he discovered three major needs: shelter, food and medical are still urgent and will remain for the foreseeable future. Last month he put together a team of three doctors and three nurses. He consulted with UN, Red Cross and other agencies to see where best to offer service to the people.

He found Haiti lacked an overriding structure to coordinate distribution of tents, water and food—so much aid remains at the airport. The team stayed with Romane's brother at his house in the mountains where it was cooler, no mosquitoes and great food. They only ate the one meal each morning and worked in the city throughout the day with their mobile medical team. They treated 50-60 people each day. Dennis then showed a slide presentation of the team, the devastation, tent communities and the Haitian people. One million people remain homeless, although water and latrine facilities are available to most people, Dennis said.

**DEATHS**

Sr. Alma Catambay, M.M.
Bro. John Mullen, M.M.
Sr. Louise Notaro, M.M.
Sr. Rose Anna Tobin, M.M.

April 18, 2010
April 17, 2010
March 17, 2010
March 2, 2010

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