Not So Far Afield

A NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYKNOLL AFFILIATES

September/October 2009 *Volume 18 Number 4*

A SPIRITUALITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Story and photo by Kevin Ahern
Greater Boston/New England

On April 4, the Boston Maryknoll Affiliate Chapter co-organized an event with the National Catholic Student Coalition (NCSC) under the theme, "A Spirituality for Social Change." The event, which was hosted by Boston College's new School of Theology and Ministry, brought together dozens of student leaders and Affiliates to reflect upon the integral relationship between Christian spirituality and social action.

The day-long event began with a meditative prayer led by members of the Inner Room, a recently created group for Catholic contemplation and action. The keynote speaker for the event was **Dr. Stephen Pope**, professor of theological ethics at Boston College. Dr. Pope gave a theological reflection on the present polarized reality of the Church and the need to find spaces of common ground in which spirituality, Church tradition, and social action are all respected.

In the afternoon, a panel discussion continued the morning's reflections focusing on three subthemes. In the first subtheme, Mission and Social Change, Boston Maryknoll Affiliates **Mark and Kathleen Morrison** shared their experiences of working as Maryknoll Lay Missionaries in Latin America. **Heather Keane**, of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, shared her experiences with Service and Social Change. The panel concluded with a reflection by **Matt Hamilton**, a student at Boston College on Spirituality for Justice.

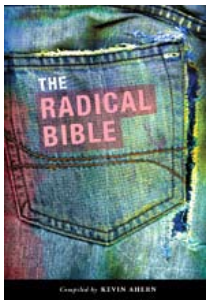
Mark and Kathleen Morrison at the Spirituality for Social Change event

Over the course of the day, two main conclusions emerged. First, in light of the polarizations in the Church between those who seek a detached spirituality without social action and those who seek engaged social action without much spirituality, there is an urgent need to develop an approach which appreciates both contemplation and social action (praxis). Second, as part of developing such a spirituality, there is a renewed need for dialogue and common ground in the Church, where Christians can learn to be humble and open to the perspectives and experiences of others rather than demonizing them. Interestingly, the event itself was a space for dialogue, not only between Catholics with different faith perspectives, but also between Catholics of different generations.

In the end, the Boston event participated in by the Maryknoll Affiliates and the National Catholic Student Coalition (http://www.catholicstudent.org/) was a positive event for all involved and hopefully it can inspire other such collaborative events in the future.

REDISCOVERING THE RADICAL NATURE OF THE BIBLE

Maryknoll Affiliate renews an Orbis Classic



This past spring, **Kevin Ahern**, a Maryknoll Affiliate from Boston, redeveloped *The Radical Bible*, which was originally published by Orbis Books in 1972. As with the previous one, the 2009 version of *The Radical Bible* is a small pocket-sized book that brings together dozens of social justice related selections from the Bible with relevant contemporary quotations from prophetic figures of our times, including Oscar Romero, Dorothy Day, Mohandas Gandhi, Thomas Merton, John Paul II, and Thich Nhat Hanh. The book seeks to be a resource for personal and group reflection and includes an up-to-date list of resources on issues of world peace, poverty, development, inculturation, liberation theology, and Christian social ethics.

It is available on-line at www.orbisbooks.com and other major book retailers.

Rich, challenging and contemporary, Kevin Ahern's version of The Radical Bible is an old friend renovated substantially to serve us well in these challenging times.

Marie Dennis

CECELIA (CJ) NICHOLS-PEARCE

__CJ Pearce__ was an active member of the Father Price Chapter in Wilmington, North Carolina. When know she will be deeply missed by her Chapter and by her good friend, __Gaye Hieb__. Our prayers go out to Gaye, the Fr. Price Chapter and CJ's family. Below is an excerpt from the Today's Wilmington Star-News obituary.

Cecelia (CJ) Nichols-Pearce, age 69, of Mount Pleasant, N.C., died Wednesday, June 24, 2009, at CMC-Northeast in Concord, NC Mrs. Pearce was employed by Pathways of Concord as a Medical Transcriptionist and was of the Lutheran faith. Mrs. Pearce was a graduate of the class of 1958 of Central High School in Charlotte, she was secretary of the class reunion committee. She was affiliated with Maryknoll, and assisted with Care Outreach Women's Group of Wilmington, NC. She enjoyed riding motorcycles with Robert. She enjoyed helping friends and family when needed. Camping was one of her favorite pastimes, an avid reader, and loved animals of all kinds. CJ enjoyed life to the fullest, and was a very vibrant person. She was a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, grandmother, and friend to all.

Born in Iredell County on June 01, 1940, she was the daughter of the late Ted Ray Nichols and Ruth (Hoover) Warner. She is survived by her husband, Robert W. Pearce; two sons and two daughters among other relatives.

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.

SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS – SCHOOL OF ASSASSINS

Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss – Northwest Regional Coordinator

Graphic from SOA Watch Info

The 2009 Vigil and Action to close this military training school in Ft. Benning, GA, will be held November 20 to 22. In one response to the twenty-year campaign to close the School of the Americas (SOA), the military renamed it the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC). Numerous graduates of this school from South and Central America have been implicated in serious human rights abuses in their home countries. (See www.SOAW.org for more information about the SOA Watch.)

The last few years, over 20,000 demonstrators have peacefully gathered on the 3rd weekend in November at Ft. Benning. Many Maryknollers typically attend the vigil and try to gather at some time during the weekend. Affiliates **Judy Bierbaum**, Albuquerque, and **Toni Balot**, New Orleans, have even been sentenced to time in prison after their non-violent civil disobedience at this vigil. Most attendees do not "cross the line" but have many opportunities to educate themselves about non-violence and to prayerfully stand in solidarity with those who have suffered abuse or even death at the hands of SOA graduates. In the past, the event has garnered little notice in the national press, possibly because there has been no violence.

Mary and Manny Hotchkiss plan to attend for the first time this year. We encourage other Affiliates to attend and to contact us in advance if you will be there. Even if you are not able to attend, you can write or call your representative and join the campaign to close this military school and to end our government's involvement in torture and human rights abuse.

Editorial Committee:

Jeanette Birondo-Goddard
Lee Fermin
Fred Goddard
Kris Neufeld
Mary Ryan-Hotchkiss
Penny Robinson
Ann Shields

Please send any letters to the editor, articles, photos or inquiries to Fred Goddard. You may also contact Fred 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.

Fred Goddard
PO Box 311
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311
877-897-2386
nsfa@maryknollaffiliates.org

CELEBRATING WORLD MISSION SUNDAY
"WE ARE ALL ONE FAMILY"

Gail Kelley – Southeast Regional Coordinator

Each pastor in the United States receives materials from the diocesan representative for the Propagation of the Faith, that feature World Mission Sunday and encourage a generous response to the special collection on that day. However, I had never seen any poster or brochure insert that inspired parishioners to do so. I pointed this out to my pastor and encouraged him to allow me to make World Mission Sunday not just a monetary collection but a CELEBRATION of our membership in the Family of the World. Fortunately, he agreed and all of his successive pastors have been equally cooperative.

My initial inspiration for the celebration came some ten years ago when I had the opportunity to participate in a Martin Luther King Day celebration in a small rural parish in North Carolina that was home to many immigrants. A young Columbian seminarian assigned to work there put together an offertory procession that deeply impressed me. Parishioners from as many countries and races as possible were represented. This experience expanded to involve the entire parish and to include other features—some of which I hope might inspire some of our readers to try this model in their own parishes on October 18—Mission Sunday.

Preparation of Parish Groups:

- **CCD Classes** – The Parish Director of Faith Development is contacted and asked to use the Columban Fathers *Come and See!* video series for 1st to 6th grade students on or before Mission Sunday during the CCD classes for elementary school age children (see end for more information).

- **Parochial School Classes** – The Principal is contacted and asked to use the same Columban series in the school during the week before Mission Sunday.

- **Youth Group** – The Youth Minister is contacted and a presentation by a Maryknoll Affiliate is planned before or during the week in which World Mission Sunday occurs. A video is selected from the Columban Fathers *Challenged and Empowered* series or from the Maryknoll World Productions' *Children of the Earth* series (see end for more information).

- **Young Adult Group** – The Coordinator is contacted and a presentation planned before or during the week of World Mission Sunday. A Maryknoll Media Center video is used, consistent with the preferences of the group. *The World through Kids' Eyes*, featuring 7 to 15-minute presentations of children at risk in different countries is a good choice (see end for more information).

- **Adult Education Group** – The coordinator is contacted and a presentation planned before or during the week of World Mission Sunday. A Maryknoll Video is used. However, this year, with the Papal Encyclical on Globalization being circulated, a section from Sr. Nancy Sylvester's presentation on *Globalization* given at the Affiliate Conference in 2004 may be very appropriate (see end for more information).

Preparation for Mission Sunday Masses:

- The Music Director plans appropriate hymns for the day and allows choirs that I have recruited from other parishes to sing as community members are arriving for Mass, after Communion, as a meditation piece, and again as members of the community depart.

- A Gospel Choir and Hispanic Choir from churches in the Raleigh area are recruited to participate in the Mass.

- Parishioners who represent as many races, cultures, and countries of origin as possible are invited to be part of the offertory procession at each of the main Masses . (Because a parish bulletin request for volunteers doesn't get much response individual phone calls are made.) Participants are asked to wear something from their own or ancestral country of origin.

Preparation of the Church:

- The Maryknoll Countries Posters are arranged at the entrances to the church and in the vestibule.

- Old copies of the Maryknoll Magazine are placed conveniently for pick up at an appropriate place in the Church.

Celebration of the Mass:

- After the congregation is sitting, and <u>before the Entrance Hymn</u>, the celebrant explains: "This weekend the Church is celebrating World Mission Sunday. Today's liturgy demonstrates the parish's heed to Christ's call "That all May Be One". Hopefully the Offering we place in the Mission Sunday envelopes, is reflective of our understanding that "We are All One Family" as we support missioners everywhere who are bringing Christ's love especially to our neediest brothers and sisters."

- At the beginning of the <u>Offertory Prayers</u>, the celebrant says: "Jesus calls us to go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel. On this World Mission Sunday, we ask God's blessing that, through our self-giving, the "Good News" of Jesus may be proclaimed to all nations and peoples."

  Prayers are selected from those on the Propagation of the Faith Website for Mission Sunday. However always included is: "We are a nation blessed by the diversity brought to us by numerous ethnic and cultural groups from all the continents of the world. Let us today remember our brothers and sisters in every country on the Earth, each of which has sent us its gifts."

- The offertory procession is led by someone carrying a large poster saying "We are All One Family", followed by the recruited participants wearing signs indicating their ancestral country of origin. Each person wears some article of clothing from his/her background. Often the first and second generation folks wear entire native outfits which make the procession more colorful and impressive. They proceed to the altar eventually facing the congregation on either side of the celebrant with the poster raised in back of him. We often have representatives of 17 different backgrounds, astounding newcomers at the beauty and diversity of our congregation.

- After the Announcements, the celebrant says: "I invite you to take a "Walk around the World" as you leave the Church. There are pictures of people from many countries in the vestibule. Look into their faces and then compare their lives with ours here in the United States where life expectancy is 77 years of age; and per capita GNP is $37,000 (or more updated information.)

- After the Mass, a picture of the offertory procession participants is taken with the celebrant after Mass and is included on the Parish Web Site for a week.

Our parish now looks forward each year to the World Mission Sunday celebration and has not only become more aware of the needs of people all over the world, but has become more generous in its support for the Missions.

Additional Information on Video Resources:

The Columban Mission Education Office provides the *Come and See* series rent-free. Packages are grade level specific and include a video featuring a child the age of the targeted participants in a different country. Each package also includes simple instructions for the teacher, including some simple, thought-provoking questions, student activities/ games, prayer, and take home materials.

The series can be obtained in English and Spanish and can be ordered from: Mission Education Office, Columban Fathers, P.O. Box 10, St. Columbans, NE 68056 or by calling 1-877-299-1920, The series can also be purchased for $150.

Maryknoll World Productions produces the *Children of the Earth* series. They are 15 minute videos featuring young people (middle to senior high school age) from different countries. Maryknoll also produces *The World Through Kids Eyes*, 7 to 15 minute stories of children at risk in different countries.

Go to the www.maryknollsocietymall.org for more descriptions and information on purchase prices (remember that Affiliates get a discount).

Copies of Sr. Nancy Sylvester's presentation on DVD is available through **Fred Goddard** for $5.00.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED IN NAMIBIA

Brother Mark Gruenke is looking for someone with office experience who is willing to teach Basic Office Skills in Nyangana, Namibia. This volunteer instructor will need to come for a minimum of three months. The basic curriculum of the course has already been prepared and teaching materials have been collected and organized into lessons. Supplementary material is also being prepared for the students to work on outside of formal class time. The main responsibility of the volunteer instructor will be to teach the Basic Office Skills formal lessons. This will be done in a classroom/ learning center that is specially equipped for the course. The students will be organized in one or two classes of six to nine young adults depending upon how many enroll in the program. One and a half hour lessons will be given in English three times a week to each class. The volunteer instructor will thus teach either three or six times a week. She/he will also need to be available to help the students with their home work assignments outside of formal class time.

An assistant has been hired full-time to help the volunteer instructor. Her name is **Maria Nynagana**. She is a delightful young woman who is currently studying Office Skills at a junior college in the capital. She will be responsible for monitoring the classroom/learning center and for assisting the students outside of the formal class hours. The classroom/learning center will be open Mondays through Fridays from 8 AM to Noon, and from 2 PM to 5 PM. It will also be open Saturday morning until Noon. Because the assistant is available during these hours, the volunteer instructor will not have to be present to the students all of this time. She/ he can adjust their schedules outside of formal classes to fit their own needs.

The students are poor young adults who come from a rural setting. To enroll they must have completed 10th grade, some will have completed 12th grade. The majority will be young women in their early twenties. They will pay a modest fee to take the program. They are highly motivated and fun to teach. They will live in a residence at the Parish while they are studying.

The Basic Office Skills course is part of a larger program. It is a full-time four month long program that includes computer skills (ten finger typing, Windows XP, Microsoft Word 2007 and Excel 2007, and basic Internet). There is a full time instructor, Maryknoll Brother Mark Gruenke, who teaches the computer skills. Because of their weak proficiency in the English language each student will also be doing an individualized Rosetta Stone English Language course. This is an extensive language course that requires a minimum of 100 hours of individualized computer directed study to complete. The full program will take four months to complete.

For further information, please contact
Maretta McKenna
Email: chinaserveusa@msn.com

REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

Kathy Morefield – Seattle

Since the mid-20th century, it has been possible for human beings to see the Earth in all her *ineffable beauty and fragility* from the perspective of space. Free of artificial boundaries we see the Earth as she is, beautiful, whole and undivided. US astronaut Edgar Mitchell said, "My first glimpse of our planet was a glimpse of divinity."

> *From space I saw Earth – indescribably beautiful with the scars of national boundaries gone.*
>
> **Muhammed Ahmad Faris**
> Syria

St. Francis of Assisi, 800 years ago, also saw creation as a glimpse of divinity. His love for nature and all creatures shaped his identity, spirituality and mission. He believed that all creation flowed out of and reflected the glory of God. Like Gerard Manley Hopkins, he knew that "the earth is charged with the grandeur of God." Francis saw and celebrated God in all of nature and in every person. For him, there were no boundaries between humanity and the rest of nature and toward the end of his life he wrote the beautiful *Canticle of Creatures* in which he called the sun and the moon, the earth and the stars, water, plants and animals his *brothers* and *sisters*. In 1979, Pope John Paul II proclaimed Francis the patron saint of ecology calling him an example of genuine and deep respect for the integrity of creation." The United States Catholic Bishops Conference (USCBC) published a document in 1992, entitled *Renewing the Earth*. In it they praised St. Francis who saw all creation as sacred and interconnected. Francis taught us how to be in right relationship with God and with creation.

Image: NASA

But we have become a people who have fallen out of right relationship with God and creation. Benedictine Sister, Teresa Jackson, writes in *Passion of the Earth*:

> *Throughout history, human beings have assumed that the earth's resources were unlimited, infinite—this is especially true in the developed world. We believed we could use as much as we wanted and there would always be more. We haven't been able to imagine a time and place where we couldn't have all we wanted from earth's bounty.*[1]

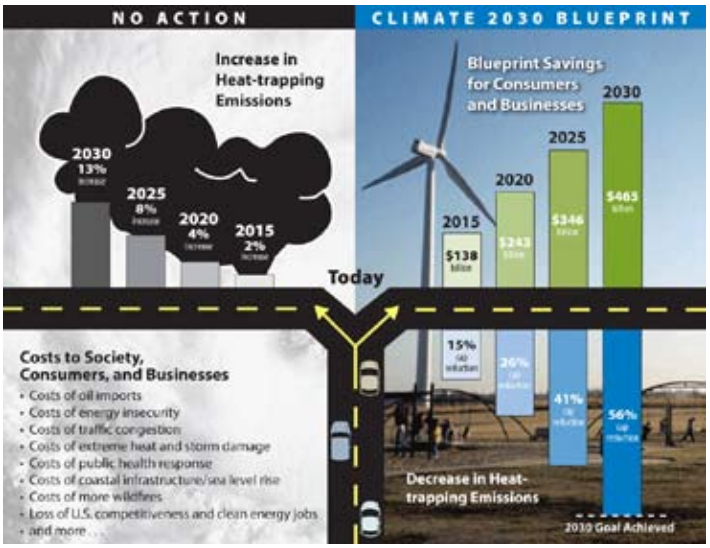
Mahatma Gandhi once said that there are enough resources on Earth to support everyone's need but not everyone's greed. Sixty years after his death, we are facing an environmental crisis of cataclysmic proportions due to greed and the hoarding of resources. Humanity is depleting Earth's precious resources and poisoning her waters and atmosphere at alarming rates. We live in fear of scarcity rather than in the promise of abundance. The inevitable outcomes of this fear are poverty, violence, war and the destruction of our environment.

> *Before I flew I was already aware of how small and vulnerable our planet is; but only when I saw it from space, in all its ineffable beauty and fragility, did I realize that humankind's most urgent task is to cherish and preserve it for future generations.*
>
> **Sigmund Jahn**
> (Former) German Democratic Republic

We forget that our God is a God of abundance. There is a beautiful passage in Isaiah that promises if we live in right relationship with God and creation, God will guide us continually and make our bones strong; then we will be like a watered garden, like a spring of water and we will raise up the foundations of many generations and be called *repairers of the breach* (Isaiah 58:11-12).

Repairers of the breach! These hope-filled words have never carried more meaning than they do today when the breach is enormous and humankind has strayed far from right relationship with the Creator. Are we willing rise to the challenge of living in right relationship with God and creation and become *repairers of the breach*? And, if so, where do we begin?

In 2001, The US Bishops published the document *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*. In it they state, "As people of religious faith, we bishops believe that the atmosphere that supports life on earth is a God-given gift, one that we must respect and protect. It unites us as one human family. If we harm the atmosphere, we dishonor our Creator and the gift of creation… At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family." The bishops go on to say that they accept the consensus findings of the international scientific community and the conclusions of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change as a basis for continued research and prudent action. They define *prudence* as "a thoughtful, deliberate, and reasoned basis for taking or avoiding action to achieve a moral good."[2] In this spirit of *dialogue, prudence and the common good* let's take a look at two critical issues facing our planet today, global warming and increasing scarcity of available fresh water.



Global Warming Crossroads: Union of Concerned Scientists

Global Warming/Climate Change

The *greenhouse effect* is a natural phenomenon that keeps the Earth's temperature in a range that allows life to flourish. The energy of the sun warms Earth's surface and atmosphere and this energy radiates back toward space as heat. A portion of this energy is absorbed by a delicate balance of heat trapping gasses in the atmosphere that create an insulating layer ensuring an average surface temperature of 59 degrees Fahrenheit. Without this insulating layer, the temperature on Earth would be too low to sustain life.[3]

However, there is international consensus and alarm among scientists all over the world that the Earth's climate is changing due to *global warming*—a rise in the Earth's temperature resulting from an increase in the heat trapping gases in the atmosphere. They believe the primary cause of this is human use of oil, coal and natural gas. The increase in temperature causes polar ice caps to melt and Antarctic glaciers to slide into the oceans at a rate that may result in coastal flooding. Scientists predict that the melting of polar ice caps and mountain glaciers may cause sea levels to rise by at least three feet. And, unless global warming emissions are reduced, average temperatures could rise another 3 – 9 degrees Fahrenheit in the US by the end of the century. Half of the world's plant and animal species are at risk of extinction by the year 2100 as their habitats are destroyed and the ecosystem crumbles threatening an increase in the insect population, disease and famine. It behooves us to pay attention to a proverb attributed to Native American: *We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children*.

Water

Water is the elixir of life, our most precious resource. When you look at the photo of Earth from space you see that it is covered with water. Water makes up seventy percent of the earth and up to sixty percent of the human body. Without water we will die in a matter of days, yet 98% of the water that covers our planet is salt water and undrinkable. Authors Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke in *Blue Gold: The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water* say, "Available fresh water amounts to less than one-half of one percent of all the water on earth."[4]

Rather than protecting this life-giving resource for the common good, we are squandering it. Barlow and Gold believe that, "humanity is depleting, diverting, and polluting the planet's fresh water resources so quickly and relentlessly that every species on Earth—including our own—is in mortal danger."[5]

Industrial waste dumped into our rivers and lakes finds its way into our oceans endangering many species of fish and marine life. Pesticides and fertilizers used for agriculture pollute our ground waters. Dams and unsustainable logging practices cause irreparable damage to fragile ecosystems, plant, marine, animal and human life. In the poorest parts of our globe, the land and rivers are drying up and the poor who already suffer from inadequate and contaminated water supplies are desperate. Water in desperately poor countries is sold to international companies that bottle it to sell to consumers in the developed world. It is estimated that more than one in six people worldwide do not have access to safe freshwater. Eighty-eight percent of diarrhea deaths, the leading cause of illness and death in the world, are caused by lack of sanitary water.[6]

For me… the overwhelming experience was that of a new relationship… the unavoidable and awesome personal relationship, suddenly realized with all life on this amazing planet.

Russell Schweickart
USA

Our Response

In an op-ed piece in *The New York Times*, Jared Diamond measures the difference in lifestyles between the first world and the developing world. There are nearly 6.8 billion people in the world today. Diamond claims that, "The average rates at which people consume resources like oil and metals, and produce wastes like plastics and greenhouse gases are about 32 times higher in North America, Western Europe, Japan and Australia than they are in the developing world."[7] He points out that, "Much American consumption is wasteful and contributes little or nothing to quality of life. For example, per capital oil consumption in Western Europe is about half of ours, yet Western Europe's standard of living is higher by any reasonable criterion, including life expectancy, health, infant mortality, access to medical care, financial security after retirement, vacation time, quality of public schools and support for the arts." *World Watch Institute* says that the United States, with 5% of the world's population, consumes 30% of its resources.

According to Sally McFague, the people who feel the impact of the environmental crisis the most are those least responsible for it, and those most responsible for it (people in

the first world) are the least impacted. She writes, "As more of the earth becomes desert, water scarcer, air more polluted, food less plentiful, the lines between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' will become even more sharply drawn. Justice for the oppressed will recede from view when resources become scarce."[8] The Catholic bishops, in *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*, remind us that this is, indeed, a justice issue.

The United States Catholic Bishops have called on Catholics to be *repairers of the breach*. In *Renewing the Earth*, they remind us that, "Safeguarding creation requires us to live responsibly in it, rather than managing creation as though we were outside it."[9] If our experience of the interconnectedness of all life and created matter flows out of our spirituality, we will be moved to act to begin to repair the breach. Sally McFague writes in *The Body of God*, "The issue before us in not only one of knowledge… but also one of behavior… One of the ways to deal with ecological despair, the despair we feel when we think about the future we are willing to the next generation, is to refuse the role of victim to become active to participate in the vocation of the planetary agenda." We can do this as individuals, families, Affiliate Chapters, parishes and communities. We can act by sharing knowledge and solutions; by advocating for the common good through urging our government leaders and corporations to be stewards of the earth rather than lords over it; and we can change our own behaviors individually and communally.

A wonderful resource for parishes, Affiliate Chapters and Just Faith groups is *Care for All of Creation: A Six-Session Process for Faith Communities*, created by the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center (IPJC)—a collaboration between several women's religious communities and the Oregon Province of Jesuits—in Seattle, Washington. It encompasses the four pillars of the Maryknoll Affiliates—spirituality, global vision, community and action—and can be ordered through the IPJC website (www.ipjc.org).

A resource that compliments the above is *Passion of the Earth*, created by Benedictine Sister Teresa Jackson and Quaker artist, Melanie Wiedner. *Passion of the Earth* takes a prayerful look at the awesomeness of creation and the pain inflicted on it by humanity through seven stunning fabric art pieces, poetry and prose. A set of Passion of the Earth with prints of the artwork can be ordered through the Monastery of St. Gertrude at: www.gsinformation@stgertrudes.org, and larger prints and additional artwork through Melanie Wiedner's site: www.listenforjoy.com.

Watch the 20-minute video, *The Story of Stuff*, a mini-documentary about where our "stuff" comes from, where it ends up and how consumption and waste affects our environment and its most vulnerable people (http://www.storyofstuff.com/).

Read and discuss the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops' document, *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*.

Take the *St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor* as an Affiliate Chapter, parish, family or individual (http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/).

Watch the award-winning documentary, *Flow (For the Love of Water),* www.flowthefilm.com, available in libraries, video shops and through Netflix.

Our hope is that this article is just a beginning. We invite you to discuss the topic of Creation and humanity's role in sustaining it with your Chapters and share your ideas and suggestions with the rest of the Affiliates, your families and communities. Remember that our God is a God of abundance and that we are invited to become r*epairers of the breach*. Chief Sealth of the Suquamish Nation was attributed to have said 150 years ago: *How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them? Every part of the earth is sacred to my people.* May his words inspire us to see every part of the earth as sacred as well.

1. Jackson, Teresa OSB, *Passion of the Earth*, Monastery of St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, Id, 2006 www.StGertrudes.org.
2. USCBC, *Renewing the Earth*, 1992
3. Union of Concerned Scientists, *Global Warming*, www.ucsusa.org
4. Barlow, Maude and Clarke, Tony, Blue Gold: *The Fight to Stop the Corporate Theft of the World's Water*, The New Press, NY, 2002
5. Ibid
6. InterCommunity Peace and Justice Center, *A Matter of Spirit (AMOS)*, No. 82, Spring 2009, Seattle, WA, www.ipjc.org
7. Diamond, Jared, *What's Your Consumption Factor?*, The New York Times, January 2, 2008
8. McFague, Sally, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*, Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN, 1993
9. USCBC, *Renewing the Earth*, 1992

Other Resources:

- *Climate solutions*: www.climatesolutions.org
- Dennis, Marie, Moe-Lobed, Cynthia, Mangle, Joseph, Taylor, Stuart, *St. Francis and the Foolishness of God*, Orbis Books, 1993
- Maryknoll, Office of Global Concerns, *Update: Ecological Debt*, June 29, 2009
- United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCBC), *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*, USCBC Publishing Services, 2001.
- World Watch Institute, *Vision for a Sustainable World*.

WE ARE ALL SONS, DAUGHTERS OF EARTH

Miguel D'Escoto MM – President UN General Assembly

The following are excerpts from the address given by Maryknoll Father **Miguel D'Escoto***, president of the UN General Assembly, at the beginning of the UN Conference on the Financial and Economic Crisis in July 2009. You can read the entire speech at http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/statements/econferenceopen240609.shtml*

… It is neither humane nor responsible to build a Noah's Ark only to save the existing economic system, leaving the vast majority of humanity to their fate and to suffer the negative effects of a system imposed by an irresponsible but powerful minority. We must take decisions that affect us all collectively to the greatest extent possible, including the broad community of life and our common home, Mother Earth …

First of all, we must overcome an oppressive past and forge a hopeful future. It must be acknowledged that the current economic and financial crisis is the end result of an egoistical and irresponsible way of living, producing, consuming and establishing relationships among ourselves and with nature that involved systematic aggression against Earth and its ecosystems and a profound social imbalance, an analytical expression that masked a perverse global social injustice. In my opinion, we have reached the final frontier.

…From this perspective, it is essential to seek what the Earth Charter calls "a sustainable way of life." This implies a shared vision of the values and principles promoting a particular way of inhabiting this world that guarantees the well-being of present and future generations.

The viewpoint that comes to us from the so-called earth sciences, that the Earth is contained within a vast, complex and evolving cosmos, must be incorporated. This Mother Earth, the term approved by the General Assembly this past April 22, is alive. Mother Earth regulates herself, maintaining the subtle equilibrium among the physical, chemical and biological in such a way that life is always favored.

This contemporary concept agrees with the ancestral vision of humanity and of the native peoples for whom the Earth always was and is venerated as Mother, Magna Mater, Inana, Tonantzín, as the Náhuatl of my country, Nicaragua, call it, or Pacha Mama, as the Aymaras in Bolivia name it.

There is a growing awareness that we are all sons and daughters of Earth and that we belong to her. As President Evo Morales has reminded us many times, she can live without us, but we cannot live without her…

At this time in history, with the global crisis and for the sake of the common good of the Earth and humanity, we must take collective short- and medium-term action to keep society functioning on the one hand, and to set a foundation for new forms of sustainable living on the other. Five essential elements could give coherence to new initiatives that seek to construct alternatives …:

First: the responsible and sustainable use of limited natural resources.

Second: putting the economy back in its proper place in society as a whole by abandoning the reductionist vision which had made it the main focus of human coexistence.

Third: to spread democracy to all social relations and institutions.

Fourth: to build a minimum ethos on the basis of multicultural exchange and the philosophical and religious traditions of peoples, so that they can participate in defining the common good of humanity and the Earth and in developing new values.

Fifth: to strengthen a spiritual vision of the world that does justice to man's search for a transcendent meaning of life, of the creative work of human beings and of our brief appearance on this small planet.

These are the foundations for a bio-civilization which gives a central role to life, the Earth and humanity, whose citizens are sons and daughters of joy rather than of need…

The common good of humanity and the Earth is a dynamic reality that is constantly evolving. Four ethical principles are important for keeping it alive and open to further development.

AFFILIATES AS REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

Fred Goddard – Executive Coordinator

Many Maryknoll Affiliates have taken to heart the call to be "repairers of the breach." The best example may be the Center for Creation Spirituality in Baguio, Philippines. It was established by the Maryknoll Sisters after a devastating earthquake. Maryknoll Affiliates from the Baguio Chapter are very involved in the work at the center, including guiding visitors through "The Cosmic Journey" - a walk through the Maryknoll Sisters' Ecological Sanctuary. You can view a video of the walk on our website or contact me for a DVD.

Other projects include working with ecological farming projects, such as the "Pachamama Farm" at Maryknoll, New York and a similar project established by the Maryknoll Affiliate Chapter in Missoula Montana. Last year, Maryknoll Affiliates came from around the country to help the Maryknoll Sisters in the continued development of their grounds at Maryknoll, New York, as an ecological sanctuary.

We invite you to share your own stories of how you or your Chapter is working to be a *repairer of the breach*. Please feel free to send us an article for *Not So Far Afield* or post an article or join discussions on our website. We also encourage you to go to the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns website and see their many resources on Faith-Ecology-Economy.

'GOT AHIMSA?'

Veronica Horn – Greater Los Angeles

In an ongoing search to learn about the philosophical, cultural and literary traditions of nonviolence and peace, two Maryknoll Sisters, another Los Angeles Affiliate and I went to a lecture last July at the Ahimsa Center of California State Polytechnic University. **Sr. Kathryn Shannon**, ever enthusiastic and always a fashion statement for any event, wore her African dress. **Sr. Lucy Yu**, the newest Maryknoll Sister to join the Los Angeles Affiliates, **Kathy Bautista** and I attended. We had fun and purchased t-shirts that advertise the Ahimsa Center and say "Got Ahimsa?"

The Ahimsa Center focuses on interdisciplinary education about nonviolence and nonviolent social change. This lecture was part of a conference for K-12 educators to learn the art of living together, an art that prepares students for the real world which is rapidly changing and becoming increasingly diverse. Believing that nonviolence is a core human virtue, a force that is grounded in courage, compassion and conciliation, and is key to creating peace (the theme of our Western Regional Conference 2010), we felt compelled to attend.

The word Ahimsa is from the Indian culture of yoga. It means to live in a nonviolent manner. Ahimsa assigns primary individual responsibility for thought, action and reflection and is the basis for conscious and mindful choices. Individual transformation is a precondition to social transformation.

We learned that the ethical precepts of Nonviolence—Ahimsa—are truthfulness (Satya), Nonstealing (Asteva), Chastity (Bramacarya), and Noncovetousness (Aparigraha). These are core principles of Yoga and come from ancient Indian scriptures, which include the Vedas, Upanishads, and Yoga Sutra. Other aspects or limbs of Yoga consist of personal practices such as Cleanliness of mind of body (Sauca), and Fervor or strength of will (Tapas), and yoga postures, breathing, and meditation. Yoga is ultimately trying to attain the surrender of oneself to God in order to reveal the soul.

References to yoga are found throughout Indian scriptures, which rank among the oldest in the world. The earliest are the Vedas, the root of all subsequent teaching. They are considered to be revealed by God at the beginning of time and to contain eternal truth. They consist of hymns, ritualistic rules, philosophy, and ancient lore.

The most widely known Vedas are called the Upanishads or poems, and they explore the universal nature of the soul. The Katha Upanisad speaks to stilling the mind and controlling the senses; it also describes the practice and beneficial results of yoga.

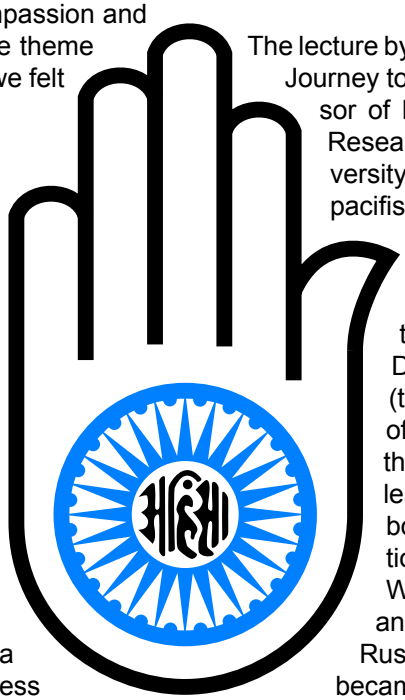
Pantanjali wrote a philosophical compilation of the entire sum of knowledge of yoga known as the Yoga Sutras or Yoga of the Eight Limbs. Pantanjali's Yoga Sutra is the authoritative text, recognized by all schools of yoga. It is the source of all subsequent works.

Yoga is classically divided into eight aspects or limbs (Astanga). The limbs are interlinked. Each has numerous facets which are revealed by practice and study. They lead progressively to the higher stages of awareness and to spiritual living. Their disciplines become more and more internal and spiritual.

Mohandas Gandhi applied ahimsa to politics through his non-violent satyagrahas. "Nonviolence is a weapon of the strong," Gandhi repeatedly emphasized during his life. It is a virtue that creates a sense of goodwill toward others and motivates one to seek justice for all. Interdisciplinary education and practical training about nonviolence may be the key to creating a culture of lasting peace.

The lecture by Claybourne Carson, PhD was titled "King's Journey to Gandhian Nonviolence." Carson is professor of history and director of Martin Luther King Research & Education Institute at Stanford University. He said that after initial skepticism about pacifism, Martin Luther King Jr. undertook a long intellectual journey toward a philosophical understanding of Gandhian nonviolence. With so much social upheaval during Martin Luther King's time, it is a great credit to Dr. King that he could display Ahimsa, Satya (truthfulness) and Tapas (fervor and strength of will) with so little time to learn and integrate this philosophy. Unexpectedly thrust into a leadership role during the Montgomery bus boycott of 1959, King soon became the nation's best known proponent of nonviolence. With his wife's encouragement and the guidance of veteran Gandhians such as Bayard Rustin, Glenn Smiley and James Lawson, King became committed to Gandhian principles. By the time of his 1959 trip to India, King had become even more committed than his former colleagues.

After the lecture, we ate a delicious vegetarian lunch with high school teachers who had come to the lecture for summer study. We heard of their individual classroom experiences and their hope to bring the Gandhian principles back to their classrooms. They are the peacemakers of today.



In the image, the hand with a wheel on the palm symbolizes the Jain Vow of Ahimsa. The word in the middle is "ahimsa". The wheel represents the dharmacakra which stands for the resolve to halt the cycle of reincarnation through relentless pursuit of truth and nonviolence (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahimsa http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahimsa). Graphic credit: Author Elembis printed with permission (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jain_hand.svg)

NEWS FROM THE KNOLL

Maryknoll Lay Missioners Celebrate 15 Years as an Association and Multi-Year Jubilee

On August 14, the Maryknoll Lay Missioners celebrated the 15th anniversary of the founding of Maryknoll Lay Missioners as an Association of the Faithful. **Fr. Ed Dougherty**, Superior General of the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers presided over a Eucharistic Liturgy to celebrate the occasion.

That same weekend, Lay Missioners sent in 1974 and the Classes of 1983 and 1984 marked their anniversaries. In 1974, the first lay missioners were sent by the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers and the Maryknoll Sisters on a trial basis. The lay mission program was formalized in 1975. More than 24 Returned Missioners attended.

Next year, **Archbishop Timothy Dolan** of New York will be celebrating mass in honor of the Classes of 1975 and 1985 and the 35th Anniversary of the Maryknoll Lay Mission Program. The program's official transition into an Association of Christ's Faithful with its own canonical and civil status as an independent organization took place in 1994.

Fathers and Brothers Celebrate Jubilees

Forty-six Jubilarians gathered with family, former classmates, friends and benefactors for the weekend of June 26-28. In all, there were over 1,000 guests. A special 70th anniversary was marked by **Fr. Norbert Verhagen MM**. There were Anniversaries marked for 65 years, 60 years, 50 years, 40 years and 25 years of Oath to the Society and ordination to the presbyterate. Society Jubilarians were joined by seven members of the Congregation who were celebrating their 50th Anniversaries of entrance into the Maryknoll Sisters (see the previous issue of *Not So Far Afield*).

Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers Announce Video Contest Winners

The Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers announced the two winners of the *Explore My Mission* video contest, **Anthony Ma**, of New York City, and **Sarah Vandenberghe**, of Maple Grove, Minn. The two went on a ten-day mission experience to Brazil in June where they worked alongside the Maryknoll Brazil Mission Community in their service among the poor in shantytowns of the city of João Pessoa.

The two winners were chosen from eight finalists who submitted short videos about themselves, their service or ministry, and the reasons they would be a good choice for this mission project. The videos of all finalists, along with a daily blog can be viewed at www.ExploreMyMission.org.

Anthony has already expressed interest in and contacted the Maryknoll Affiliates. Having been active in Transfiguration Parish in lower Manhattan, where **Fr. Ray Nobiletti MM** serves as Pastor, Anthony is interested in organizing a Maryknoll Affiliate Chapter among the youth.

Maryknoll Vocation Encounter

The Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers, Maryknoll Lay Missioners and Maryknoll Sisters jointly hosted the annual Maryknoll Vocation Encounter from July 30 to August 2, 2009. The theme for the event was "Reaching Out in Love, Rooted in Hope."

The event was directed towards individuals discerning a minimum of 3 ½ years of mission with Maryknoll Lay Missioners, or a lifetime of mission with the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers or the Maryknoll Sisters. Participants in this spiritual and informative event met current and returned missioners; listened to mission stories from those who have worked in Asia, Africa, and the Americas; visited the campus of each Maryknoll entity; learned about the evolution of Maryknoll's overseas mission efforts; and engaged in individual and small group prayer and discussion. Information was also provided on the Maryknoll Affiliates, the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers' Short-Term Volunteer program, and the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns.

Wisconsin Maryknoll Affiliate **Alice Murray** was present along with others who have been interested in the Maryknoll Affiliates. Others expressed an interest in the Maryknoll Affiliates after attending.

A Busy Summer at the Maryknoll Sisters

This summer, at the Maryknoll Sisters, a number of women made various commitments to the Maryknoll Sisters. **Sr. Analyn Manauis** and **Sr. Rebecca Nyaki** renewed their vows. **Sr. Mercy Mtaita** and **Sr. Ngoc-Ha Phamt** took their final vows.

On August 9, 2009, **Sr. Laura Guledew**, **Sr. Anastasia Lindawati** and **Sr. Generosa Natividad** pronounced their first vows. The day before, **Jareen Aquino** had her Canonical Reception. The weekend before that, **Sr. Esperanza Principio** was welcomed in a transfer to the Maryknoll Sisters. She was formerly with the Congregation of the Religious of the Virgin Mary. Finally, **Gloria Ardenio Agnes**, **Isabel DaCosta Araujo**, **Letisia Simon Rusololo** and **Hyun Jung Kim** were approved for candidacy.

DEATHS

Rev. Walter J. Maxcy, M.M.	July 6, 2009
Rev. Thomas E. Lavelle, M.M.	July 17, 2009
Sr. Regina Johnson, M.M.	August 2, 2009
Rev. John P. Lomasney, M.M.	August 13, 2009
Rev. William T. Knipe, M.M.	August 14, 2009
Rev. Robert C. Bayne, M.M.	August 14, 2009
Sr. Sara Theresa Fogarty, M.M.	August 16, 2009
Rev. William J. Tokus, M.M.	August 17, 2009

BRAZILIAN MISSION COMMUNITY ADDRESSES CURRENT TOPICS AND FEARS

D. Jean Schneider – New Jersey Chapter
With assistance of Maryknoll Lay Missioner Joanne Blaney

As a Maryknoll Affiliate, I was privileged to attend the annual assembly of the Maryknoll Brazil Mission Community (BMC) last January 10 to 17.The sharing sessions would interest many and included women leadership training, ecology, theatre of the oppressed, a holistic healing center, and work in violence prevention and restorative justice. Other sessions included organic farming, mission education (writing and translating Brazilian articles), gardening, Casa Esperanza (Hope House), prison ministry, and parish ministry.

Dedicated missioners from two areas (São Paulo region in the South, and João Pessoa region in the Northeast), meet each year as a Maryknoll family to pray, review past efforts, and plan for the coming year. This year they met at a pousada (lodge) in the mountainous area in the interior of the state of São Paulo, near the city of Cunha, a small city famous for a clay soil used for porcelain ware and ceramics. **Fr. Steve Judd, MM**, missioner from the Cochabamba, Bolivia area, facilitated the meeting, which began each day with prayer.

After the opening liturgy, the assembly began with **Fr. Dan McLaughlin's** review of the history of Maryknoll activities in Brazil since its beginnings in 1975. At this time, Brazil was in the midst of a dictatorship. Two groups were formed, one in Rio de Janeiro and the other in São Paulo. Later the Rio group joined the São Paulo group. In 1984, the first lay missioners arrived. By 1985 the dictatorship had ended and many changes were taking place. In 1990, the Maryknoll sisters were invited to come to Brazil.The mission area of João Pessoa opened in 1993.

On Monday, participants voiced hopes and fears for the future of the BMC. While realizing the need for being open to new possibilities, they expressed their fears of the restrictions which might result from the current complexities in the three different Maryknoll entities.

Tuesday focused on "Visioning" vis-à-vis new global realities, Brazil's political climate, and the situation of Maryknoll, itself. The ministry of healing, was viewed from different perspectives. After considering several options, participants decided to retain their current regional groups, but to focus on a common ministry and to explore wider collaboration with local groups. Inviting more Brazilian participation in pastoral theological meetings will necessitate everyone's greater use of the Portuguese language.

Afterwards, priest, sister and lay missioner groups met separately, and Wednesday was a free day for visiting the area of Cunha, including some waterfalls in the region.

Photo by Jean Schneider

BMC Assembly Participants

Thursday's sessions centered on committee meetings: Personnel, Justice and Peace, Finance/Budget, Social Communications, Mission Education and Orientation. In the afternoon, members of each Maryknoll entity reported on the Chapter/Assembly meetings which had recently taken place in New York. A recurring theme was the financial downturn which has resulted in budget cuts, especially for the Sisters and the Lay Missioners.

Friday was focused on the BMC 2010 Assembly, scheduled for January 11-16. The theme will be "Healing and Restorative Justice" and will be held in the Northeast, either Natal or Recife. Participants discussed the possibility of inviting Brazilian collaborators to the Assembly, although budget cuts may prohibit this. Committee members shared their ideas for the year. There was an opportunity for visitor sharing this day, at which I reported on my work in opening a training center in 2008 to enable women to qualify for jobs in Sergipe in the Northeast.

Saturday included a discussion about the BMC website, which, regrettably, is not receiving many visitors. This website requires time and effort to maintain. Suggestions were to share information about Maryknoll members, to include occasional articles, to interface with events within Brazil, to include some articles written in Portuguese and to seek volunteer help from university students who have expertise in web design. The web address is mklbmc.org. The group would welcome interaction with members of the other Maryknoll entities.

Currently the following are members of the São Paulo area: **Joanne Blaney**, **Fr. Dan McLaughlin**, **Heidi Cerneka**, **Mercy Mtaita, MM**, **Carolyn Moritz, MM**, **Angel Mortel and Chad Ribordy** (daughters **Cecilia & Elisa**), and **Sara McLaughlin**.

The João Pessoa area membership includes **Kathy Bond & Flavio Rocha** (daughter **Maya**), **Efu Nyaki, MM**, **Theresia Ndesoma, MM**, and **Anne-Marie and Jonathan Yu-Phelps** (daughters **Madeleine & Grace**)

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Not So Far Afield
Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
P.O. Box 302
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302