



Mission Office
Archdiocese of Los Angeles
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MISSIONSLA

MISSION OFFICE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES

ON PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimages to Israel, Turkey, Greece and Rome are made in our day as journeys in a type of pseudo-tourist role hoping to make a connection in a famous site where the martyrs once passed. Their lives remain so distant and questions abound as to how historical the story is? Is this a valid site? Did events occur here? What was the martyr really like beyond the exaggerated accretions of martyrology?

How rude it is to go to Guatemala and El Salvador. Where the blood is so thick that you can meet the neighbors who were there. The stories so horrific, that one may not want to hear about saints anymore for fear that the events might just be so close. You, yourself, could be implicated — whether from indifference or silence. Rude because the whole pilgrimage loses its tourist feel and safety.

Last January (2002) traveling with some 25 clergy and religious brothers, I had the chance to walk in the footsteps of the Martyrs of El

Salvador and Guatemala, as Maryknoll is so polite to title the journey. The experience is not comfortable in conscience, but enjoyable in camaraderie and fantastic in food and hospitality. Ten days of journey within to fight with anger and tremble before atrocity. Ten days wondering how close are we? Could the blood again begin pouring? The martyrs are not in the past. They are still being made, today, despite peace agreements.

A few images. As you visit the garden at UCA (University of Central America), one sees the roses planted by a husband and a father. His daughter and his wife, the cook for the priests — both killed in that world famous massacre of Jesuit clergy. The silence is painful even while the voices of current university students are heard in the background playing soccer. The nearby chapel stays safe until one respectfully tries to exit and discovers the back wall with murals of atrocities in black and white. Sketches of real pictures, real people whose relatives you can talk to.

In Guatemala outside the cathedral there are marble columns with the names of some 70,000 people killed during the 36-year 'civil' war. As documented by the REMHI report by the Catholic Church

and then affirmed two years later by the United Nations, 200,000 people died in this conflict — 80% of these were Mayan Indians. More than 90% were killed at the hands of government militias. Statistics float into space



In Guatemala outside the cathedral there are marble columns with the names of some 70,000 people killed during the 36-year 'civil' war.

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without meaning until your hand passes over their marbled name, more names, like heralds announcing to all who pass into the sanctuary a perpetual call to worship.

Lastly, I hang on the words and expressions of Claudia Agreda as she describes the efforts of those who pulled together the information for the actual REMHI Report (Recovery of Historical Memory Project) completed by the Human

Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala. Most recall that two days following publication of the report on April 24th, 1998, Bishop Juan Gerardi was murdered. What we do not hear about is the hundreds and hundreds of Guatemalans who courageously came forward, often sneaking information and details of the murders and martyrs. So moving is it to meet people who had courage because they wanted to offer an instrument to the world community on how to heal from such deep wounds, for lands where genocide became expected, and for lands where it remains still an option.

The Maryknoll Pilgrimage is an opportunity to be irritated. You meet outstanding Maryknoll leaders such as Bill Donnelly, John Spain and Tom Marti whose humility and humor before all this can irritate. And you pass through the doors of globally known like Romero, Jean Donovan, Sr. Maura Clarke and Sr. Dorothy Kazel, into a room of thousands of unknown who continue to play behind the scenes — among saints.

I remain angry and horrified. Sick at times. I recall one large diocese refusing the opportunity of such a program for fear that their clergy might fall physically sick from such an experience. Oh, would that we would be sick so that we could hear and see. It is very dangerous to be so close. More dangerous, though, to be safe.

I invite any of my brothers to risk a little, even more so, for a bishop. Go on a pilgrimage with those still close enough to breath down your back. And maybe, if you turn around in an unexpected moment, in a place of quiet and painful silence, you might just catch their breath as they look into you with the eyes of so many and inspire a deeper life. †

Fr. Dave Ayotte



To get involved call Mission Doctors or Lay Mission-Helpers

LMH (213) 637-7222 • MDA (213) 637-7499

LA CHILDREN BRING HOPE TO EAST TIMOR

The children of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles have succeeded again in raising both funds and hope. Due to their generous efforts, a village hospital in East Timor that was burnt down will be rebuilt. The Mission Office has received over \$40,000 towards this dream. The money raised is coming in from children who saw the plight of children their own age and wanted to make a difference, as part of our annual Advent appeal. During Lent this year children are working to help the children of Ethiopia.

The Holy Childhood Association (HCA), a Pontifical Mission Aid Society, founded by French Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson in 1843, is an international organization dedicated to fostering



children's awareness of the mission of the Church. More than 100 countries participate in this effort to bring the young from different cultures and languages closer together. †

— By John Perez

DAVID BRAUN WRITES ON HIS RECENT MISSION VISITATION...

I arrived on Kwajalein Atoll where I was welcomed by our Lay Mission-Helpers, Jesuit Father Bill Sullivan, and Msgr. James Gould, the Prefect Apostolic of the Prefecture of the Marshall Islands. LMHers Mary Anne Cannavan, Bev Thornburg, and Carrie Rieden are all doing wonderful work at Queen of Peace High School on Gugeegue Island of the Kwajalein Atoll. Bev and Carrie are teachers there and Mary Anne is the all-around administrator who does everything from ringing the school bell for classes to keeping the financial books to administering entrance exams.

My trip was an education and left me with a recon-



David Braun meets students

firmed realization of the unbelievable work and dedication of not only the missionaries of the Pacific Islands but that of missionaries throughout the world. †

THE WHOLE CHURCH IS MISSIONARY

Western and American Samoa are part of that string of exotic islands that lie off Australia starting with New Guinea, then the Solomons, Vanuatu, the Fijis, Tonga and finally the Samoan islands. A few years ago I had the privilege to spend ten days in American Samoa where I gave a one-day retreat to the deacons and their wives and a weeklong retreat to the Bishop and the 13 priests of the Diocese of Pago Pago, the diocese of all American Samoa.

One of the exciting surprises I encountered in my days on the island was to become aware of the major role of the Samoan catechists. Each of the villages of American Samoa boasts its own catechist, and the catechist's family. These are not part-time catechists, but dedicated, full-time, lifetime lay apostles. These catechists and their families form a critical core of co-workers for every village along with the deacons (who have their own civil employment) and the priest pastors of the villages.

Their preparation as catechists requires four years of courses in scripture, theology, liturgy and culture. They spend their fourth year in the pastoral experience of working in a village under the direction of the parish priest. With their final selection as catechists, they are commissioned lectors and acolytes. The catechists, along with their families, receive their livelihood through the monetary and food offerings of the village communities in which they live and serve.

The catechists have common responsibilities and duties. These include:

- to live with the people in a village as a village family;
- to represent the Catholic Church to the village elders;
- to teach catechism to the children, youth and adults;
- to organize bible studies;
- to prepare the people for their sacraments;
- to visit the sick and bring them the Eucharist;
- to work with youth in the areas of their spiritual growth, social maturity, play and work;
- and, to carry out specialized work depending on the local needs and their own talents: scout masters, teachers, prison chaplains, radio ministries and even coaches. (Samoans love their athletic games)

In a remarkable way these catechists represent the face of the Church as Mission. The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church from the II Vatican Council makes it clear that "the pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature." In fact "the whole Church is missionary," and being light and salt to the world, the missionary task is the responsibility and the vocation of the entire people of God.



Catechist Sefo and his community

The Church as Mission is not just about those who work in the "foreign missions" but all of us entrusted with the responsibility to so share our gifts and talents that God in Christ will become "all in all."

— Bishop Sylvester D. Ryan

prophet's words to himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. . . today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:18)

Through his passion, death and resurrection Jesus Christ established the Church as "the universal sacrament of salvation." We are the Church, the Body of Christ, and by our baptism and confirmation we are empowered to share in the mission of Christ. It is our identity, our relationship to the Father, our vocation. All of this is a singular grace, freely given to us by God's choice in Jesus Christ. What is freely given needs to be freely shared as Jesus directed us: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28: 19)

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MISSIONSLA

is a quarterly newsletter of the Mission Office of Los Angeles. We appreciate your letters, suggestions, and mission news items.

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Call the Mission Office, drop us
a line, or visit our Web site to
find out more about opportunities
to support the missions.

<http://www.missionsla.org>

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

TO OUR MISSIONARIES IN THE FIELD

*Love and prayers from
the whole archdiocese to:*

APRIL

4 SUE OZAR
22 MARY ANNE CANNAVAN
23 DICK STOUGHTON

MAY

9 DEB KUMMER
26 ANNA KUMMER



MISSION CIRCLES LUNCHEON

The Annual Luncheon gathering of members of Mission Circles will take place on April 26, 2003 at the Pickwick Banquet Center in Burbank.

Founded by Msgr. Anthony Brouwers to connect the people of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles with missionaries serving around the world, Mission Circles continue to offer both spiritual and financial help as they have done for more than 40 years!

Speaking this year are Dick and Nancy Bureson who served as missionaries in Central America. In addition to this presentation, Thai dancers will entertain, newly formed Mission Circles will be introduced, and recognition will be offered to groups and individuals who have been involved for more than 25 years.

Never passing up the opportunity to support the missions, raffles are also held for items donated by Mission Circle members and funds raised go to support the missionary efforts of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

For more information on how you can form a Mission Circle with your parish, please call the Mission Office at (213) 637-7223. †



THE WHOLE CHURCH... *continued from page 3*

We all love to hear missionaries, men and women, priests, religious and lay people, tell their stories of working in the missions. When they come to our parishes to raise funds for the work of their missions, we find ourselves being extremely generous and proud to share in their work.

But we cannot all go to foreign lands as missionaries or even become full-time catechists like our Samoan brothers and sisters. Yet we still remain missionaries with the power of a missionary vocation. How do we exercise this gift in our own time, place and culture?

Wherever we live, the Church tells us in The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, "all Christians are bound to show forth, by the example of our lives and by the witness of our speech, that new person in Christ we put on by baptism and the power of the Holy Spirit by whom we were strengthened at confirmation." Some Catholics certainly are doing precisely what the Church asks of us or otherwise we would not see so many people coming into the Church through the RCIA. They come because they have seen faith lived in people's daily lives.

Furthermore, even if we are stay-at-home missionaries, lay people, for example with families and jobs of our own, there are works of justice and compassion we can carry out in our own homes, neighborhoods and communities. When we identify with others who are "waging war on famine, ignorance and disease and thereby struggling to better their way of life and to secure peace in the world," we are missionaries of the Good News. Together we are building the Kingdom of God.

The Church as Mission is not just about those who work in the "foreign missions" but all of us entrusted with the responsibility to so share our gifts and talents that God in Christ will become "all in all." (1 Cor 15: 28)

Or, as The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "Thus every person, through these gifts given to us, is at once a witness and the living instrument of the mission of the Church itself 'according to the measure of Christ's grace.'" (CCC # 913) †

— Bishop Sylvester D. Ryan

(Uncited quotes are from the Decree on Missionary Activity)

There is another way to share your blessings with the PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH... YOUR WILL

This is a unique way to give to the Church and insure that your desire to help the Missions continues.

TO MAKE A BEQUEST

The correct legal designation for gifts by will or trust is:

"The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Los Angeles, a corporation sole"
for the benefit of The Society for the Propagation of the Faith.



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