

THE MARYKNOLL SOCIETY AND THE FUTURE

A PROPOSAL

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As the third Christian millennium unfolds, Society members are well aware that our numbers are steadily declining. Regions are merging, promotion houses are closing, and efforts are being made to tighten the structures of leadership. The occasion of this paper is an awareness that another step may need to be taken to deal realistically with the situation in which we find ourselves today. Some Society-wide reflection needs to begin regarding the future of the Society as a whole. In addition to the measures now being taken to right-size and restructure ourselves, should there not be an effort to develop some contingency plans aimed at a time when we might be reduced to a token presence in the countries and peoples we now serve and have such a step forced upon us? What follows is a proposal to get the membership thinking about the future of Maryknoll in terms that go beyond the internal adjusting currently under way.

On every level of the Society we need to surface scenarios about the Society's future in face of the possibility of severely reduced membership. It is a matter of preparing ourselves in advance for a series of developments beyond our control, developments that will no longer yield to more and better intra-Societal adjustments. In order to put some flesh on these bones, let me present two scenarios that might be considered.

Scenario #1

The Maryknoll Society would remain basically what it is at present and would learn to live and be productive with relatively few permanent members. The Society began with a small group of dedicated members and presumably would have remained committed to what the founders had brought into being even if their numbers had remained very small. Having even a few missionaries active overseas is a worthwhile goal and turning most of the Society's fund raising, mission education and recruitment over to hired personnel would be a small price to pay for maintaining the identity of Maryknoll and the influence it has exercised on the American Church. Special efforts would be made to enlist the cooperation and support of the American bishops, asking some of them to serve as a board of consultants and conferring with them on a regular basis. This scenario would demand relatively little change of perspective on the part of the membership, ensuring that the Society as we have known it would have a secure future as a missionary community, albeit on a substantially reduced scale. At the present time in the Society, this scenario, or a variation thereof, seems to be unofficially in place.

Scenario #2

The Maryknoll Society would enter into negotiations with the American bishops for the purpose of becoming the nucleus of a new missionary enterprise owned and operated by the American Church. The bishops, who are primarily responsible for bringing the Gospel to the world, would now have the beginnings of an instrument for directly realizing and accomplishing their episcopal calling on its deepest level. As priests and brothers, on the other hand, we would now be able to represent the American Church in mission not only on paper but in fact. We would be sent forth to the harvest fields by the bishops themselves, who in the process of sending would be continually reminded of their own sacred trust. This would strike directly at the current missionary malaise in America and become an occasion for mobilizing missionary energies in local dioceses and parishes. As it is now, missionary responsibilities that belong properly to the bishops can too easily be surrendered to Maryknoll and other Societies of Apostolic Life. While the personnel and resources of Maryknoll are not the only ones needed to bring about this rebirth of missionary life in Catholic America, the Society is in a very good position to start the ball rolling. We can approach the bishops with the assurance that we are not asking them to take on the burdens of an aging society. Our financial resources make it very clear that we can carry our own burdens and that our only reason for handing our personnel and resources over to the American Church through the bishops is to assist a new birth of Catholic missionary energy and effort in our homeland. We are in a position, therefore, to approach the bishops with our assets instead of our needs. We would make available to them immediately our long and effective experience in fund-raising, mission promotion, recruitment, media relations, education and formation, not to mention ongoing presence and labors in mission fields around the world. With all of these things at their disposal the bishops would be able to jump-start a new American institution focused on bringing the Good News to the world, an institution that would invite Catholics of any and all vocational callings to turn toward the vast multitudes in our world who have never heard the Gospel message, an institution that might eventually include a National Missionary Institute to serve the formational needs of those interested in joining this new missionary generation. One important condition must be met if Maryknoll should decide to move in the direction of this scenario. The Society would have to make its deci-

sion within a particular window of opportunity. That is, the move would have to take place while there are still enough able-bodied specialists in the areas mentioned above to make their contribution to the new missionary entity. The width of this window of opportunity should not be too difficult to determine. Finally, the Society would have to be convinced enough of the value of this scenario to sell it to the American bishops. We should not expect them to see the importance of this development all at once. The burden of proof will always be on us.

A Working Criterion

How can we judge the relative value of these scenarios and of others that might be offered in the future? Although there is no easy answer to this question, I can think of one criterion that most Maryknollers would accept. It is that mission is a higher priority than the Maryknoll Society. What is best for mission is best for the community centered on this hill in Westchester County.

Maryknoll and the Future

Larry Egan

I recently finished writing a short history of Maryknoll's work in Central America. During my research on these years (1943-), I became aware of many specific events that I had not known about when I was there in Central America in the 1960s and 1970s. But more importantly, when I was able to see the entire 70 years in a single glance, Maryknoll's body of work in Central America stands up as most impressive, much more so than I would have thought when I first sat down to write. Looking at the forest rather than the trees can be enlightening. This big picture also enabled me to identify some critical moments when decisions, made or not made, had a real impact on the future. As I finished my writing, I wondered what the future held for Maryknoll in the Central American region and, more importantly, what the future held for Maryknoll world-wide.

Then I came across a small book by Johannes Metz that dealt with religious groups.¹ Religious orders play a unique role within the Church.² They are usually founded to answer a need not being addressed by the larger Church – whether a diocese, region, or even the universal Church. The founder(s) of every order perceive that there is a need that is not being met by the institutional Church, and seek to fill that niche. The new group perceives that it has a special charism or talent to offer to the larger institutional church, usually for a very specific purpose at a specific moment in the life of the Church.

Religious orders have a prophetic role to play. They call the larger Church's attention to an area of neglect or to the need for a response to a particular concern that is not being taken care of by the Church. As a prophetic voice, each order is, especially at first, considered a pest, an irritant, a disturber of the peace, or a plain pain in the butt. New religious orders challenge the institution to change. They shake it up and suggest that all is not right. This prophetic role is a corrective one, saying that something is not quite right in the present institution, saying things people do not want to hear. New orders call for change, for a move in a new direction. They remind the Church that it can not settle down and adapt itself permanently to any given situation, culture, or environment. New orders are also reminders to existing religious orders that they too have to check themselves continuously, to ensure that they have not become complacent, or are settling into a comfortable mold. All religious orders have to challenge themselves to be true to their charisms as situations and realities change.

Metz asks a long series of questions about religious orders and their place in the Church:

- Where can we find the fruitful tension that is needed today between the religious orders and the institutional Church?
- Where is the living antagonism between them?
- Where are the tensions that characterized the early history of most religious orders?
- Have the religious orders in the meantime moved too far into that middle ground where everything is nicely balanced and moderate – as it were, adapted to and tamed by the institutional Church?
- Where today do the religious orders exert a shock-effect within the Church?
- Does not the growing sacerdotalization [clericalization] of the religious orders in recent times perhaps form part of this cunning strategy of adaptation?
- Is the legal exemption of the religious orders (over against the church hierarchy) still made use of at all today, in the sense of a fruitful relationship of tension – fruitful, that is, for the Church as a whole?
- Are not many religious orders meanwhile (or at any rate a great number of individual religious houses) being too firmly organized by pastoral plans in whose elaboration they themselves had hardly any share?³

¹ Johannes B. Metz, *Followers of Christ*, Paulist Press, N.J., 1978. Most of the ideas on religious life offered here are taken from Metz's book. His book was based on a series of talks that Metz gave in Germany to religious orders after they had just held a synod on the role of religious life in post-Vatican II Germany.

² Maryknoll, strictly speaking, is not a religious order. Maryknollers do not take the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples has jurisdiction over Maryknoll, rather than the Congregation of the Religious. But for all *practical* purposes Maryknoll functions as a religious order.

³ Metz, p. 86.

Metz's book got me thinking about Maryknoll's charism – Maryknoll's specific niche in its specific time.

Maryknoll's Perception of Itself

In 1908 Rome removed the U.S. Church from the jurisdiction of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide (now called the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples) and placed the American church under the Congregation of the Bishops. What this meant was that the U.S. Church was no longer considered to be a mission territory, but rather was an established local church. Two American priests, James Anthony Walsh of Boston and Thomas Frederick Price of North Carolina, decided that, as an established local church, the U.S. Church should now be sending missionaries to other areas of the world, where the Church was not established. There were other groups at the time, in Europe, also interested in doing the same thing; some had done so already.⁴ Various non-Catholic Christian groups had long been sending missionaries to China, since at least 1830. In fact China was the preferred area of work for American non-Catholic Christians. In 1911, of course, Walsh and Price founded the American Catholic Foreign Mission Society (Maryknoll), and in 1917 Maryknoll sent its first four missionary priests to south China, eventually taking an area formerly under the Paris Foreign Missions Society, one of the groups on which Maryknoll had modeled itself.

Walsh and Price were challenging the American Church as an established church to avoid becoming complacent. They urged the American Church that now was the time to become missionary, to extend itself to other places, to look outward rather than inward. They challenged American Catholic youth to serve the Church in an overseas apostolate. Many American Protestants had done this; now American Catholics should do so too. Over time, American Protestant missionaries would raise their children in China and these children would become members of the U.S. State Department, journalists like Henry Luce, or writers like Pearl Buck and John Hersey. American Protestants with China experience would play an important part in the formation of American opinion and foreign policy regarding China in later years.

Maryknoll's approach was certainly innovative and on the margin of American Catholic society. Many American bishops thought that there was enough to do at home. Why go to a place as foreign and exotic as China when there was still so much to do for the burgeoning Catholic immigrant community, for example? In the corridor outside the Maryknoll Archives, which leads to the crypt where Walsh and Price are buried, there is an interesting photograph. The picture shows the 105 participants in the First Plenary Synod of the Hierarchy in China held in Shanghai in 1924. There were only seven Chinese ordinaries at that time. Many of the remaining ones are bearded and cassocked – European bishops. But one bishop stands out. He is clean-shaven, and dressed in a black suit and Roman collar. He is Francis X. Ford, M.M., the ordinary of Kaying in south China. At that time, Maryknoll was the only American Catholic foreign missionary group in China, and this photograph graphically illustrates the situation and environment that Maryknoll was challenging. Could the U.S. Church supply something new? Were Americans capable of being missionaries in such a different context? Did Americans have something unique to contribute? Could U.S. missionaries survive the tough conditions of overseas mission life? These were some of the questions Maryknoll was attempting to answer.

Over time in fact, Maryknoll answered all of these questions. Maryknoll would become almost synonymous with mission in the U.S., especially in the triangle of Boston-Chicago-Washington, the area that contained two-thirds of American Catholics in the U.S. well into the 1950s. When someone mentioned Maryknoll in that area the immediate response was, "Oh, the missionary group." When boys or girls said they were thinking of becoming a missionary, the nuns in grammar school said, "Try Maryknoll."

By the 1960s Maryknoll was the Catholic group that had the largest or second largest number of Americans serving overseas. (During the 60s, Maryknoll and the Jesuits vied for the highest number. Usually the two groups were within five or ten missionaries, with the leadership changing from year to year.) In less than fifty years Maryknoll had gone from an unproven idea about American Catholic missionaries to one of the prime American implementers of that idea in fields afar.

Situation Post-Vatican II

⁴ Robert E. Sheridan, M.M. *The Founders of Maryknoll*. CFMSA, 1980. Sheridan speaks of the efforts of the Divine Word Missionaries, the Mill Hill Fathers, the Paris Foreign Missions Society, and some other individuals who were thinking along the same lines or who were being asked to start an American region of these European groups. He also highlights the different visions of Walsh and Price. In some ways the vision of Walsh became the operative vision only because of Price's early death in China in 1919.

Because of World War II, Maryknoll was forced to make a radical shift in the 1940s, by moving from the Orient to Latin America. While also opening up missions in Africa at this time, Maryknoll's main move was from the East Asian environment that was predominately non-Christian to the Latin American environment that was almost exclusively Catholic. In the 1960s, Maryknoll responded to Vatican II (the Church as the People of God) and the 1968 Latin American Bishops Conference held in Medellin ("the preferential option for the poor"). Internally, following Vatican II, the Maryknoll Sixth General Chapter (1966) and Seventh General Chapter (1972) started a process of decentralization, devolving more authority to the regional level. The idea of a missionary came to be re-focused as Maryknoll distinguished its role from that of the local pastoral parochial ministers. Maryknoll began to concentrate on training lay leaders in ministerial and the socio-economic spheres. Lay missionaries, the Society's major innovation of the 1970s, began to play an integral part in the work of Maryknoll initiatives. Maryknoll trained lay missionaries in the regions, and created the Maryknoll Lay Missioners in the United States to channel trained American lay Catholics to the mission regions as well.

Maryknoll introduced these internal innovations, but so did many other groups. All these pioneering groups were challenging the institutional church. Indeed, innovative groups and dioceses were providing a bit of a shock to the Church at large during this time, because they were able to respond more quickly and more directly, for example, to Medellin's "preferential option for the poor." Many were on the fringes or margins of society anyway, and so more conscious on the gut level of the need for change. They were also able to respond more quickly because of their smaller size and their ability to adapt to new situations.

But, starting late in the pontificate of Paul VI (1963-1978), the institutional church began to draw back from the concept of collegiality and the emphasis on lay involvement that was so central to the Church as the People of God. The Synod of Bishops became a consultative body rather than a deliberative one. Under John Paul II (1978-2005) and continuing under Benedict XVI (2005-), the institutional church started to return to its more pre-Vatican II, centralizing tendencies in a systematic and comprehensive way. Ironically, John Paul II became more the pope *to* the world rather than the pope *of* the church. His popularity soared outside the Church when he stood up to Communism in Eastern Europe, especially in his native Poland. His traveling and visits to numerous countries made him one of the best known people in the world, but his constant journeys also overshadowed the role of local bishops and local bishops' conferences. John Paul was a centralizing figure, not a champion of collegiality. He encouraged the management of the Church by the Curia, not by local authorities; the Curia is always a supporter of centralization and was wary of Vatican II's call to diminish central power. Local episcopal conferences, empowered by Vatican II, were now bypassed by Rome at best, virtually decommissioned at worst.

For example, in 1998, in his Pastoral Letter on the Nature of Episcopal Conferences, John Paul II basically eliminated national bishops' conferences as an independent voice.⁵ In his pontificate, most of the bishops who had participated in Vatican II and had experienced collegiality in a lived situation had either died or retired. John Paul II began to replace them with bishops known for their strict orthodoxy on issues such as birth control, abortion, same-sex marriage, women's ordination, and homosexuality. They also were also chosen, in no small measure, because of their personal loyalty to John Paul II and his retreat from Vatican II. John Paul II also began to name religious-order people as bishops and ordinaries of major archdioceses in the U.S. and elsewhere[Pls1]. Currently Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Kansas City are under the leadership of religious order or Opus Dei ordinaries. Benedict XVI has continued the policies of John Paul II. While some commentators see his episcopal choices as more intellectually gifted, Benedict also seems to be naming religious-order bishops[Pls2]. Some observers have seen these policies as an attempt to enhance the autonomy and teaching authority of individual bishops, as long as they hew strictly to the Vatican orthodoxies and show their unfailing loyalty to the pope. The micro-managing that started under John Paul and his Curia has moved down to the diocesan level and is even spreading to the parish level. Many of the priests ordained in the last twenty-five years enjoy being known as "JP II priests," every bit as orthodox as John Paul and Benedict and openly critical of the reforms of Vatican II.

Under both pontificates, groups such as Opus Dei and the Legionaries of Christ, who follow the same approach – orthodox and loyal to the nth degree – have assumed new positions of prominence. These trends represent a major reversal of what groups like Maryknoll have been doing.

Unlike Opus Dei and the Legionaries of Christ, most religious orders are more democratic and less hierarchical than the institutional Church itself. They elect their own leaders, who usually have terms of office from three to six years. These leaders are thus accountable to their members, and their short term of office means that members

⁵ William Portier, Commonweal, 8-12-2011, p. 24.

can rectify what they perceive to be mistakes fairly rapidly. Orders usually have contracts with bishops that clearly state what their mutual roles are. Strictly speaking, individual members are not under the authority of the bishop but under the religious superior. The bishop can request that a member be removed from his diocese but he cannot move that member without the permission of the superior. Furthermore, religious groups are financially independent and support their own members – no little thing. In many cases religious orders are relatively small, so that most members know each other personally or at least know of each other and each other's work. These characteristics give religious-order members a wider scope of freedom than their diocesan counterparts. This freedom allows orders to respond more quickly to changing conditions.

One example of this flexibility is certainly evident from the situation of Maryknoll in Central America. In the 1940s and 50s, Maryknoll responded to a new situation in the Church. Asia was closed to most missionary groups because of World War II. Their members were repatriated to their home countries and their newly ordained were unable to go to Asia. Maryknoll turned to Latin America and Africa. In most places in Latin America where Maryknoll worked there was a real need for evangelization and the reestablishment of the Church. In many ways this was missionary work that was not too different from the work in the Orient. While almost all Latin Americans were baptized, they had never been evangelized, especially in the predominantly indigenous areas.

As the work of evangelization proceeded and became successful, there arose the need for pastoral parochial care of the "converts". Since the then-current system of Catholic seminary preparation was long and arduous and the requirement for celibacy was not culturally favored, the process to develop local clergy took a long time. The local vocations only started to come after more than twenty years from Maryknoll's arrival in Guatemala. In the meantime, Maryknollers assumed the pastoral parochial responsibilities – running parishes. Over time Maryknollers became the local diocesan clergy. This diminished their missionary thrust while strengthening the parochial aspect of their work. Maryknoll had just moved into this parochial role without a lot of thought. It just seemed to be the thing to do – indeed it was the only thing to do, since there were no other priests. This move into parish work was facilitated by the fact the area was entrusted to Maryknoll and Maryknollers practically speaking elected one of their own as bishop. The Maryknoll bishop was responsible for the prelature/diocese.

Vatican II re-energized the missionary thrust. This caused conflicts in pastoral settings, however, since those engaged in parochial work felt denigrated and reduced to second-class citizens. Not surprisingly, they began to resist the change. Missioners who were ordained and sent out in the 1960s and 70s saw these "parish priests" as obstacles to doing "real" missionary work. Over time the conflicts were minimized and a shaky truce emerged, but this came at some cost and lots of personal anguish for many on both sides of the issue.

At the same time as all this was going on, many American diocesan priests arrived in Latin American mission areas, recruited from the United States in response to the "Call for a Hundred Thousand[Pls3]." Maryknoll provided its language-school facilities, helped them find places to work, and passed on its collective wisdom. But evidently Maryknoll never seriously considered turning over any of its established parishes – for example, those in Huehuetenango – to the American diocesan priests. This would have been one way to bridge the gap until the local Huehuetecos were ordained, but Maryknoll did not choose to do so. Such a role for American diocesan priests would have allowed the Maryknollers to move into more specifically missionary roles, while those who wished to continue doing parochial work could certainly have done so. Since the diocesan priests were usually in a mission area for a limited time – five years usually – those parishes could have been turned over to the Huehuetecos first; the Maryknoll parishes could have been turned over later. All this might have been a more orderly process that what actually happened, and could have cut down significantly on the friction. But I never remember hearing a discussion on this – nor did I ever think of it myself.

This approach might not have been considered because in the early 1960s no one foresaw the clergy exodus of the late 1960s and 1970s. But another reason might also have been because Maryknoll had become too comfortable and settled in its parochial role. There are fewer challenges when everyone is a Maryknoller. Outsiders, with different training and experience, might challenge the Maryknoll way of doing things because Maryknollers all had similar training. It is always easier to have your own independent area. In most cases I think this was an unconscious way of thinking, rather than a planned, conscious, or premeditated approach.

Role of Religious Orders Today

How can religious orders exercise their prophetic, corrective, and charismatic roles in today's Church? Metz makes the interesting observation that the current "vocation crisis" may be more a crisis of function. While he

made this comment more than thirty years ago as the “crisis” was just starting, it may be truer today. Maybe the clerical function in overseas work is not the *most* necessary one. Perhaps there are aspects of mission life that appeal to youth that do not require a lifetime commitment or the clerical state. The success of the Maryknoll Lay Missioners and the increase in vocations to the Maryknoll Brothers may be signs of this.

For example, Maryknoll has been sending 5-15 lay missionaries overseas annually since 1980. In 1990 delegates at the Maryknoll Eighth General Chapter voted to make these lay missionaries full members of the Society. Unfortunately, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples rejected this. Maryknoll was then faced with leaving things as they were with the lay missionaries as informal members of the Society or establishing the lay missionaries as a separate independent entity. Maryknoll opted for the second approach and in 1992 the lay missionaries formally became the Maryknoll Lay Missioners (MKLM).

Since then, the MKLM has struggled as it tries to become self-sustaining. The Society and the Maryknoll Sisters Congregation continue to help the MKLM financially and in other ways, but the MKLM has to expend a lot of its energy, resources, and personnel in raising funds. This has limited the number of people the MKLM can train and send overseas. But more importantly, the ruling by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples has made the Society and MKLM into two separate entities, clerical and lay, each one trying to survive, rather than one movement of the People of God moving forward in a new way with the lay missionaries on the cutting edge and the clerical members in a complementary position. At the time, the 1992 decision to make the lay-missioner program independent and under lay direction seemed sensible and preferable. But in hindsight, that critical ruling may have caused the prophetic, charismatic role of mission to become lost in the shuffle as both groups struggle to survive and settle institutional issues. The law of unintended consequences remains alive and well.

Ars Moriendi

Metz talks about the end of a religious order. He distinguishes between going out of existence and the “art of dying” (*ars moriendi*). He says that religious orders are works of the Spirit for the Church, but they do not have the promise of the invincibility of the Church. I take this to mean that a religious order has the presence of the Spirit for a certain period, but not necessarily forever. Metz puts it this way:

“...that institutions within the Church must start from the presupposition that they do not enjoy this support (of the Holy Spirit) forever. Must they not take the possibility into account, precisely because they have their origin in the work of the spirit, that they may die and become extinct?... The fact that a movement disappears, that it is as if it were pensioned off and that it dies, indeed that it becomes forgotten, does not say anything against its having its origin in the work of the Spirit.”⁶

In other words a religious order is only for a time – long or short. This is the normal life- experience of a religious order.

Over the last fifteen years, the Maryknoll Society has done an enormous amount of work to ensure that the sick, retired, and those who will retire are adequately provided for. This had become a growing concern as the Society began to age significantly. The Society moved in a proactive way before there was a crisis. But this recent emphasis, along with the very limited number of new clerical members entering the Society, may have unconsciously focused attention on maintaining the status quo, of tending to needs of the present rather looking to the future with new bold moves. This is understandable and hardly unique among any group, religious groups included.

Role of Lay people

Vatican II encouraged groups like Maryknoll (including the Jesuits, the Spanish Burgos missionaries, Vincentians, etc.) to look at lay leadership in a new way. Lay people were trained in ministerial roles and in all phases of leadership. This was due in part to a shortage (and assumed diminishing number for the future) of clerical personnel, but more importantly was at the core of what Vatican II was all about – the Church as the People of God. In the period 1970-2011, religious groups as well as local pastoral agents, both clerical and lay, devoted a majority of their efforts to building lay leadership. They saw this training as a fulfillment of the challenge of Vatican II for the whole Church and of Medellin for Latin America in particular.

⁶ Metz, p. 19.

As we have mentioned earlier, while these grass-roots efforts were underway, the institutional church began to move in a different direction, seeking to blunt the impact of the Council. Under John Paul II, a return to a more pre-Vatican II-oriented church started and built up steam. This more hierarchical approach, a more one-size-fits-all approach, began to be hailed as the “true” response to Vatican II. Loyalty to the pope and to his vision was seen as more important than diverse responses to the rapidly changing reality recognized by Vatican II.

The result is that religious groups are now at a crossroads. Their experience and, in many cases, their successes tell them that they are on the right track. The institutional Church, however, is certainly moving in a different direction down a different track. Is this a moment for all religious groups to begin to examine their prophetic and corrective role? Should they begin to speak out for their vision? How do they do this in a loyal and faithful way? Or are “loyal and faithful” code words for ignoring Vatican II? Religious groups have been much better in speaking truth to political power than to religious power. Can religious groups convince the institutional Church that, precisely by speaking out, they are fulfilling one of their specific roles in the church? That they are “loyal and faithful” to best of what the Church should be?

Some possible practical approaches:

1. Could Maryknoll convene a meeting of like-minded groups (the Paris Foreign Missions Society, the Mill Hill Fathers, the Society of African Missions, the Mexican Foreign Missions Society, the Spanish Burgos missionaries, American Jesuits, etc.,) to discuss the present situation, agree on modes of action, and then act collectively?
2. Could Maryknoll prepare for its next chapter with a single issue: “What is the future?” A lengthy preparation in the areas and on the Society level could precede the chapter, and everyone who is an active member or who will be for the five years after the chapter could be a voting member at the chapter. Collectively, everyone who will be involved in carrying out the mission will have a voice and vote in determining the mission.
3. What kind of effort could be made to unite the Society, the Congregation, the MKLM, and the Affiliates into a unified, collaborative, single effort, focused on mission rather than survival? This would have been informal, but nevertheless an agreed-upon collective strategy.
4. Does the present predicament require a person or a group with a new vision to start over and build a new way?

New visions, new orders, new initiatives – these usually start in a time of crisis. That is the nature of a crisis – a time of challenge or decision making. Challenging the status quo, the accepted way, is not readily accepted by the majority. The ones who propose something new are not usually applauded, especially by their own. Pain and suffering are part and parcel of new visions on both sides. If the past is prologue, for the future the religious groups will be misunderstood. They will pay a price. Sts. Francis, Ignatius, Vincent de Paul, and many others paid a price. So will new prophets and visionaries. While not all those who face opposition are prophets, all prophets face opposition. Only time determines who is right.

As the poet Antonio Machado says, “No hay camino, se hace el camino por andar,” That is, “There is no path, one makes the path by walking.” That phrase may describe our future.

BECOMING AND BEING CHURCH IN THE “ECCLESIAL WINTERTIME”

By Stephen P. Judd, M.M.

COLD WEATHER WARNINGS AND WINTER WINDS

Throughout the past year a striking metaphor has both fascinated and frightened me and given me pause for much reflection. A theologian friend of Spanish origin here in Bolivia Victor Codina is credited with reviving a phrase once attributed to his Jesuit forebears Ignatius Loyola and more recently to Karl Rahner in the form of an open ended question, “how to feel and become Church in an ecclesial wintertime?” At first glance few of my cohorts in the missionary brotherhood and sisterhood who share the same perspectives and lived experiences would dispute the validity of the present moment as an “ecclesial wintertime”. One would go even further by terming it an “ecclesial ice age!” Those of us of the generation who embraced the spirit of the Vatican II era of Church as the People of God and tried to live it out over the past fifty years have good reason to wonder why the bright glow of this spirit has dimmed and come under such suspicious questioning and scrutiny from more conservative restoration minded sectors of the Church on the eve of this fiftieth anniversary of the Council.

The sex abuse scandal and shocking cover ups by Church leaders that have come to light in the past ten years is just one sign, albeit the most dramatic one, of the “ecclesial wintertime.” Going back even further the shift away from a more pastorally engaged church leadership worldwide to one bent on institutional preservation at whatever cost can be considered another likely cause for the palpable malaise many inside and outside of Church circles have noted. Early on in my graduate studies in the sociology of religion in Berkeley in the 1980s my Jesuit mentor John Coleman stressed a notion and a principle that I have found even more operative in today’s context. In the face of challenges and threats to institutional survival no matter how legitimate they may be, *raison d’Eglise*, literally reason of Church, rules the day giving rise to the use of whatever means are necessary to safeguard the Church’s privileged place and prerogatives in society against any real or imaginary adversary.

Any means available from extreme secrecy to outright denial to defensiveness are used to assure and justify the end of maintaining an image of power, influence and hegemony. Blame is often placed on the secularist media and a perceived anti-Catholic bias rather than to confront institutional internal factors. Historical examples of the application of this principle abound. As we have so often seen *raison d’Eglise* rather than faithfulness to the Gospel continues to exert a force on institutional Church policies and practices. However, wherever one turns, increasingly a growing number of Catholics openly voice their indignation at these policies. Others quietly protest the unjust treatment of theologians like Elizabeth Johnson or top down decisions made without any consultation. Many Catholic laity, happily, no longer identify with the “pay, pray and obey” image of an earlier time and have become militant in their struggle for a continuation of the Vatican II spirit of ongoing renewal that sees the Council as an unfinished project, one that held out the promise of a more collegial spirit, now largely forgotten or absent on an institutional level.

We cannot limit the principle of *raison d’Eglise* solely to the actions of members of the hierarchy. It permeates the entire Church structure on multiple levels. If the censorship of theologians by bishops represents one manifestation of the principle, religious communities are not exempt from its causes and consequences. Often times the leaders of religious communities are pressured to exercise control over the prophetic actions and consciences of their members to placate Church authorities, or to convey a false sense of unity with devastating effects on the spirit of morale and renewal within the communities themselves. To maintain the veneer of a sense of loyalty, dissent of any kind is looked upon as a deviation from the norm of *raison d’Eglise*. If nothing else, the Vatican inspired investigation of women religious in the United States is but one example of how pervasive such a principle this is and what havoc it can wreck within the entire People of God if left unchecked and unquestioned.

All of these signs and many more examples of the “ecclesial wintertime” can cause one to despair and to question one’s own Christian commitment. Indeed many Catholics have departed the institutional Church in droves out of disgust or a sense of helplessness to change this reality. Lapsed or former Catholics, according to some studies and statistics, now constitute the third largest religious denomination in the U.S. Alarming as this trend is, many continue to stubbornly persevere by remaining within the Church with the kind of creative witness that sows the seeds of newer ways of being Church that respond to the needs and challenges of the present moment building on a retrieval of the best of the tradition and breaking new ground at the same time. They do not sit back and passively accept the fate of the “ecclesial wintertime.” Rather individuals and communities alike are pointing the way to alternative ways of being and becoming Church that inspire hope even in the darkest moment of the Church in the throes of an “ecclesial wintertime.”

COMING INSIDE FROM OUT IN THE COLD AND COMING HOME BY ANOTHER ROUTE

A recent three extended month visit to the U.S. allowed me the opportunity to renew ties with several of these people and communities. Engaged conversations with a range of people who make up a composite of an emergent, if not embattled Church, convinced me that there remains alive the promise of a long awaited renewal occurring in the unlikely places all around the country. This expression of Church and these communities to whom I owe a huge debt for sending me out in mission in their name are blessed with enormous vitality along with the potential to be latter day manifestations of the biblical “leaven in the mass” to inspire hope. The occasion of the Maryknoll Centennial in 2011 enabled me to both confront disturbing signs of the “ecclesial wintertime” as well as afford me numerous opportunities to witness the generation of new and creative ways of being Church. The vast and varied constellation of Centennial events and celebrations provided the setting to observe, judge and participate in actions that prefigure and anticipate this new moment of renewal.

That Maryknoll’s Centennial celebration would take place in the midst of an internal controversy over the actions of one of our members, Roy Bourgeois, is perhaps in retrospect one of the unsought blessings of our jubilee celebrations. This may require some explanation as to why I could make such a claim. Within progressive circles of the U.S. Church Maryknoll is synonymous with a prophetic response to justice and peace symbolized by projects like Orbis Books, the Washington Global Concerns Office and the prophetic witness of a long line of heroic missionaries, women and men who have “gone the whole way” into the wilderness to proclaim God’s Reign true to our original charism. Is this an undeserved inflated image that far exaggerates the reality? To some degree I would have to answer yes to the question. On the other hand, for all of our inherent contradictions and limitations I came away convinced that our journey is one that recognizes the “ecclesial wintertime” but does not accept this reality as the final word. Neither is that the conclusion of our partners and those who identify so strongly with Maryknoll’s mission around the world.

No one individual symbolizes this more to the U.S. Church than Roy Bourgeois whose dedication to the cause of closing the School of Americas at Fort Benning Georgia has aroused such admiration among Catholic social activists, young and old alike. But when Roy, acting out of his conscience, turned his attention a few years ago to the cause of women’s ordination, many of his admirers, inside and outside of Maryknoll became perplexed. Why, they ask, would he take on such a controversial issue? Would not this distract attention from his life’s crusade to close the SOA? Could this jeopardize efforts to influence legislation in the U.S. Congress to finally pass a bill for the closure of the SOA? All legitimate and natural questions, to be sure, but a justice issue within the Church was bound to provoke a potentially divisive polemical debate that intensified when the Maryknoll General Council took action to dismiss Roy from the Maryknoll Society a few years after Roy had already been excommunicated by the Vatican for not recanting his very public stance on the question of women’s ordination. His refusal to be silent on the matter finally pushed matters to the breaking point.

Everywhere I traveled for those three months in the fall of 2011 the conversation inevitably turned to Roy’s situation, especially to the stance of the Maryknoll leadership. At other uncomfortable moments his case became the proverbial “elephant in the room.” Remarkably, most of the people I met concerned about Roy and Maryknoll were and are people already engaged in this search to build another kind of Church. Yes, one could easily sense their disappointment with the process and the inevitable outcome, but most seemed ready to see this case as part of a bigger picture and Church reality scenario but remarkably able to move beyond it in the pursuit of creating a different kind of Church. The demonstrators assembled across Fifth Avenue from St. Patrick’s Cathedral on the Sunday afternoon of Maryknoll’s Centennial Mass in New York City were certainly firm in the convictions behind their protest, but not hostile toward those of us on the other side of the street waiting to process into the cathedral on that late October afternoon. In a sense their reactions were symbolic and similar to the way many women religious reacted with a great deal of serenity and renewed purpose to the Vatican ordered investigation of their communities. By and large our Centennial events and celebrations took place in the same spirit of disappointment mixed with loving understanding if not acceptance of a most regrettable circumstance.

One outstanding example for me was the Centennial Alumni Weekend at Maryknoll when close to five hundred former and active members gathered at Maryknoll to honor the professors and formation directors who had helped to shape their expansive worldview and sense of Church as the People of God. Most were from the 1960s and early 1970s, products of the life changing era of Vatican II and the social upheaval of those years. More than mere Woodstock generation nostalgia was in the air for those three days. They were there for the most part to share in the historical memory of a vision of a different kind of Church that underpinned their formation as priests and Brothers,

and a vision of Maryknoll as a diverse movement that went beyond whether one was ordained or still living out the vision in a variety of creative ways.

From the electrifying and insightful keynote presentations of former Maryknoller and psychologist Eugene Kennedy, the present U.S. ambassador to the Vatican and theologian Miguel Diaz and Penn State Christian historian Phillip Jenkins one could not mistake in the packed Maryknoll chapel the thirst for the same kind of spiritual nourishment and awakened intellectual curiosity that all of us received in our Maryknoll formation and education experience. No one can say for sure what the alumni carried away from the weekend, but many expressed a desire to see their strengthened Maryknoll identity as a key element in giving shape to the next stage in living out their present and future life commitments. This homecoming celebration had all the elements of an epiphany experience woven into it. All of us in one way or another had come home, but like the Magi our journeys home to Maryknoll were by a “different route” and that was cause for celebration!

DRINKING FROM THE TRADITIONS OF OUR OWN WELLS

Over the course of the three months two short experiences of U.S. parish life left me with many of the same impressions, albeit in vastly different but complementary ecclesial settings. One was a nearly week long opportunity to reside at St. John’s Parish in my hometown of Butte, Montana to fill in for the Society of Africa Missionary priest pastor. Like the other remaining parishes of a once flourishing and overwhelming Catholic community like Butte, St. John’s is largely made up of elderly parishioners. Funerals far outnumber baptisms or marriages. Yet, I witnessed there more than a Church caught in a holding pattern. Roy’s situation most certainly was not a major issue nor did anyone bring it up. Neither was the Maryknoll Centennial a topic of much attention. My time there, rather, was an opportunity to renew my roots in the Butte Catholic community to realize that the kind of renewal needed to rekindle the spirit of Vatican II comes from the communities that gave me and my contemporaries the “roots and wings” to live out our vocations to mission.

A brief encounter a few weeks earlier with the diocese’s pioneer missionary to Guatemala, Father Jim Hazelton, on the steps of the Helena cathedral had convinced me of the mission and Vatican II heritage both of us shared from the years under the leadership of Bishop Raymond “Dutch” Hunthausen, one who cut his episcopal teeth at Vatican II and lived it out so prophetically first in western Montana and later as archbishop in Seattle and on the national stage as a high profile peace activist. “Dutch” was the driving force behind the diocese’s commitment to establishing a mission presence in Solola, Guatemala. He stands out today as the one of the few surviving U.S. bishops who attended all of the Council sessions. Moreover, he is the one who lived the collegial spirit of Vatican II to the fullest and suffered for his convictions of building a different kind of Church in dialogue with and in service to the world.

From the encounter with Jim Hazelton recently retired from the Helena Guatemala Mission I stood in the presence of an extraordinary missionary, one who witnessed firsthand the atrocities committed against the Guatemalan people and risked everything on their behalf. A note of sadness came through when Jim confided in me that the diocesan priest named to succeed him does not share the same openness to the Mayan culture or doesn’t seem all that interested in learning anything from the peoples’ rich spiritual traditions or struggles for human dignity. In that moment on the cathedral steps of my home diocese I realized how such a witness to that “subversive” memory will be a building block for the renewal we all seek. This and other encounters with Montana Catholics were an intense and grace filled epiphany experience of “drinking from my own wells” even in the midst of the “ecclesial wintertime.”

So, too, was a weekend spent in the rural farming community of Fowler, Michigan in the parish of Most Holy Trinity for a celebration to honor the late Monsignor Albert Koenigsknecht, a Maryknoller from the town and parish who I had worked with in southern Peru in the 1970s and 1980s. For his entire mission life Al, much like Jim Hazelton in Guatemala, had been a staunch defender of the downtrodden indigenous people and a prophetic voice for the defense of the human rights of the poor. Twenty-five years ago while serving as the Prelate of the Prelature of Juli Al, or K13 as he was affectionately known, shorthand for the thirteen letters of his difficult to pronounce German last name, was killed on a roadside apparently of either a heart attack or stroke when his Toyota vehicle crashed into a parked truck. When the Mission Office of the Lansing Diocese heard of Maryknoll’s Centennial, they offered to organize an event around K13’s anniversary and I was asked to represent Maryknoll at the Memorial Mass and to preach the homily before Al’s brother and sister and a host of German immigrant farm families that packed the cathedral size parish church of this very Catholic and prosperous area of rural Michigan.

Rarely does such an opportunity to personally thank the family and friends of another Maryknoller for the witness of their native son come one’s way. Right after Al’s death in 1986, Larry Rich, a Maryknoll Lay Missioner, produced a documentary on Al’s life and work in the highlands of Peru. Never before had his family or the people in Fowler

seen the video now converted into a DVD that told the narrative of his later years, his advocacy on behalf of the struggles of the people to recover their ancestral lands and consequently, the threats and attempts against his life. To have been able to share Al's story with the people of Fowler was a unique moment to serve as a connecting link between the people of a very particular place in rural Michigan whose native son had heeded the call to mission to serve *campesinos* in a faraway and remote area of Peru. Somehow this experience showed me the essence of what it means to be Catholic missionary, namely to celebrate universal values in particular out of the way places. The week-end encounter with the people of Fowler, Michigan was another example of how theologian David Tracy's defines a classic text, the text here being a missionary witness, as "a journey of intensification into particularity."

These two encounters with contemporary parish life in rather traditional, even conservative Catholic settings of Montana and Michigan, provided that necessary access to a dimension of catholicity so necessary for my own attempts to cope with the "ecclesial wintertime." Out of these kinds of in depth encounters we are better able to come to a greater self-understanding of our Catholic identity. While many of us continue to search out new ecclesial and mission focused paradigms in a time of religious pluralism and the Church's institutional crisis a connection to foundations like these help us to create the new connections so needed to confront the present day challenges of these chaotic times.

GENTLE BREEZES BLOWING IN PROPHETICAL AND MYSTICAL COMMUNITIES AND CASINO WOMEN

Where one is most apt to discover the most profound and meaningful connection with the best of the Catholic tradition that will pave the way to new forms of prophetic witness in the Church is through observing what models have emerged within women's religious communities in the U.S. and around the world. That came through loud and clear in the meetings and conversations I had during the past three months. In the past couple of years in the face of the controversial Vatican investigation of religious life in the U.S. many outraged Catholics have come forward to recognize and express gratitude to the women religious for the selfless courageous and pioneering service women have given to shaping Catholic identity in the past two hundred years in our country. Viewing the recent LCWR produced DVD, *Sisters and the Spirit*, reinforced the passion many feel about the role that women's religious communities have played and continue to play in giving shape to a new way of being and becoming Church. The kinds of ministries in the past and in the present they have exercised were never undertaken as expressions of the need to preserve power, privilege and prestige of *raison d'Eglise*. More than any one person IHM sister and theologian Sandra Schneiders has articulated and given expression to these contributions.

Conversations with women religious friends like Joellen McCarthy, BVM, Kathleen Judge, CSJ, Ana María Pineda, RSM and several others too numerous to mention in the course of these months conveyed the same spirit of prophetic witness in their diverse ministries of giving shape to something new. While these women are engaged in active commitments in the academic world, peace and justice efforts and even in active retirement, they point the way to an emergent border crossing ecclesial identity carried out where the body of Christ is most broken in our world today. They continue in their missions to embody the best of the frontier spirit, although those frontiers are no longer merely geographic or territorial.

Rather, they find themselves at the symbolic and relational crossroads and borderlands where dialogue and the common search for alternative ways of being present to the Reign of God take precedence over providing educational and social services. St. Thomas University in Miami philosophy professor Joe Holland, in a perceptive essay written ten years ago, underscored the contributions of a stage of religious life during the past one hundred and fifty years in the U.S. when religious women constituted a kind of "Catholic Department of Health, Education and Welfare". According to Holland, that stage has come to an end. We are now on the brink of a new stage of religious life one that is generative in enabling the formation of "prophetic-mystical lay communities of ecological, societal and spiritual regeneration." One sign of this are the growing number of religious communities who have created diverse ways of affiliation and association with their original charisms as expressions of the new stage that Holland predicted and that is fast becoming a reality. More than a tactical or survival mechanism, associational or affiliation kinds of membership and identification enable religious communities to imaginatively expand the parameters of the original charism to embrace the opening up of new horizons and possibilities.

While there is substantial evidence and numerous examples of the emergence of the prophetic in religious life, the mystical contemplative dimension is perhaps not as well known or documented. The extended periods of time that I have spent with the Sisters of the Carmel of Reno, Nevada over the past twenty-five years continue to disclose for me how constitutive this dimension is for understanding the meaning of the emergence of new ways of being and becoming Church. The recent opportunity to renew this affiliation and partnership through the openness and hospi-

table spirit of that community made me even more aware of the critical role such contemplative communities play in this ongoing process to discover the new forms religious life the Spirit calls us to create in the present day context. Without losing any of their contemplative charism and heritage the Reno Carmel is able to make room and an open space both in its internal life and in its outreach to the wider Reno and world communities affiliated with them, for the creation of these new ways of being Church over and above institutional boundaries while still respecting them.

Missionary communities like Maryknoll early on our history intuitively grasped the reality of the unity of the prophetic and mystical dimensions framed in the language of “contemplation in action” that guided the vision of our founders. It is incumbent for those of us in missionary communities today to rediscover this important connection of our own heritage. To a great extent the Centennial events and celebrations did that for me in a deep and lasting way. Thanks to contemplative communities like the Reno and Baltimore Carmelites and, perhaps many more in the U.S. and overseas, we have come to recognize and celebrate the unity of the prophetic and the mystical dimensions so necessary to create new possibilities and expressions of our own original mission charism in a time that calls for a renewal of this charism.

In Reno and elsewhere on the recent leg of my journey I feel greatly blessed to have encountered many people already making the synthesis between the prophetic and mystical in the witness of their daily lives. One, in particular, Ellie Hays in Reno stands out as a person whose Catholic identity is a boundary breaking one of straddling different worlds from a place hardly considered the center of the religious and spiritual universe. A recent chapter in a new book, a kind of exposé of the life and work of women in Nevada’s gambling casinos, *Casino Women* is dedicated to Ellie. Entitled “Liberation Theology and the Pit Boss” the chapter only tells a small portion of her colorful history of forty years as a pit boss at Harrah’s Casino in downtown Reno. Although her multiple affiliations with the Maryknoll Sisters and the Sisters of St. Francis of Milwaukee and organizations like Pax Christi is mentioned in the chapter, the book doesn’t fully capture the depth and the breadth of her Christian social justice and active non-violence commitments lived out all over the city of Reno and its adjoining sister city of Sparks where she lives in a trailer park. All of these commitments converge every December 2nd on the anniversary of the martyrdom of the four U.S. Church women in El Salvador in 1980, in the chapel of the Reno of Carmel and in the presence of the Carmelite Sisters, when Ellie in a public ceremony renews her vow of active non-violence. At that moment there one can feel a noticeable thaw in the “ecclesial wintertime.”

WAITING FOR A CHINOOK IN THE ECCLESIAL WINTERTIME

As a third generation Montanan whose paternal grandfather arrived in the Treasure State while it still was a territory before statehood in 1889, I have long become enamored of an image first conveyed by Montana’s premier artist Charles M. Russell, a close friend of my grandparents and my father’s namesake, when they ran the Mint Bar in Great Falls at the turn of the last century. One of the fiercest winters on record occurred on Montana’s northern plains in 1886. Eastern newspapers were anxious to have an account of the effects of the storm for their readers. Somehow word reached cowboy and budding artist Charles Russell as he roamed the isolated and remote ranges of Montana Territory. Instead of a written account, Russell drew a simple but graphic postcard size sketch picture of a scraggly cow surrounded by ravenous wolves with its bones visible on the wind swept plains entitled, “Waiting for a Chinook” or the “Last of the Five Thousand” and sent it east as an example of the winter storms. It remains a classic testimony of the devastation that winter can sometimes bring, far more vivid than any written descriptive account could.

In the Rockies and the high plains of that region a Chinook Wind is a phenomenon that comes along in the midst of sub-zero weather and suddenly and mysteriously turns the cold into warmth in a matter of minutes. Freezing temperatures are reversed resulting in a warm thaw that can last a matter of a few hours or a few days before the force of the cold climate returns. Chinook winds are harbingers or signs that winter will not last forever and that spring cannot be far off. They give us a welcome but deceptive reprieve. But they can upset the psychic balance of people accustomed to harsh conditions living in those areas, because of the sudden and brusque and uncertain changes they may bring about turning everything upside down. They represent an interruption and are as unpredictable as are the familiarly predictable long Montana winters that can last from October through May.

In our present “ecclesial wintertime” as a People of God we also long for a Chinook Wind to reverse the trends and patterns of recent times we have noted here. The people and communities we have mentioned briefly symbolize the Chinook Winds blowing their warm breezes over the frozen ice covered tundra of the ecclesial landscape. They, like the Chinooks across the plains of northern Montana, are forerunners of something different blowing in the wind. They, too, will disrupt the status quo with their daring and creativity to envision a different kind of Church and to

begin to build it through their patience and painstaking efforts and the living out of dreams. We anxiously await the imminent arrival of these Chinook winds in our Church.

January 1, 2012

Cochabamba, Bolivia

Maryknoll Movement Seminar Summary and Reflections

Gerald Grudzen

As a result of interest in the essay that I had written on a future vision for Maryknoll, I was asked to lead a seminar in the Africa Room at Maryknoll, NY, on Saturday, September 17, 2011 as part of the Maryknoll Alumni reunion to celebrate the centennial of the Maryknoll Fathers founding in 1911. In this seminar I presented a brief summary of the key points in the article which focused on a possible new paradigm for the Maryknoll Movement which would

hopefully be attractive to younger people but also be inclusive of anyone involved in the various existing Maryknoll associations. As a possible name for this new association I would propose the **Chi Rho Movement and Chi Rho Network**. These associations would keep a Catholic identity yet attempt to also engage other people of good will who share similar concerns and values. The philosophy of such a movement would be similar to the Christophers initiated by Father James Keller, MM, in 1945. The Christophers movement had wide appeal to people of all faiths and it was characterized by the Christopher motto: "It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness." The Christophers leadership training program could be adapted and offered to young people who want to make a difference in the world yet do not want to be part of a structure under clerical or hierarchical control. The complicated position of Maryknoll around the proposed expulsion of Father Roy Bourgeois highlights the predicament facing the Maryknoll society today. We need, I believe, a more independent structure which still draws upon the rich mission tradition that Maryknoll has represented and promoted over the past 100 years. The **Chi Rho Movement and Network** could still collaborate with all of the existing Maryknoll groups but also expand its outreach beyond the traditional boundaries shaped by canon law and the policies espoused by the Vatican on women, sexuality and clerical control of religious societies.

As Father William D. McCarthy MM ('56 Maryknoll ordination class) pointed out in his **Interchange** article of 2009 (Volume 29, Number2), the term Maryknoll Movement was first used in 1929 by Father George Powers when he wrote the first history of Maryknoll entitled *The Maryknoll Movement*. The Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers and the Maryknoll Sisters represented two dimensions of this movement but did not exclude other possible forms that the movement could take.

A perusal of the book, of course, revealed that Fr. Powers (and James Anthony Walsh) regarded Maryknoll, from its formative years, as a reality larger than the Society, a reality comprising men and women, lay and Religious, priests and bishops, persons who became formal members of Maryknoll and others who did not, as well as friends and benefactors It was a movement that really preexisted the Society and out of which the Society, then the Congregation, and later the Association, and now the Affiliates would be born. (McCarthy. *Interchange*, volume 29, number 2 (2009) p. 2).

Another examples of an independent Catholic movement would be the Catholic Worker movement which has taken many positions on social justice issues which have not been supported by the American Catholic hierarchy. Since members of Maryknoll such as Roy Bourgeois have often taken controversial positions at odds with the Roman Church's official positions, it might be difficult to retain the name Maryknoll for this new expression of the Maryknoll spirit. As a possible alternative I am suggesting the term **Chi Rho Movement** or **Chi Rho Network**. The Chi Rho Fund has been a significant project to assist those who are part of the Maryknoll family when they experience various forms of financial hardship. It is my understanding that the Chi Rho fund has no direct legal ties to the Maryknoll Society and functions as an independent fund raising source for those with a pressing financial need and a connection to the Maryknoll Movement.

Following the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), Maryknoll experienced an exodus of Society members who sought an alternative life style to that allowed within canonical structures.

Many of those who left the Society still wished to participate in the mission of the Maryknoll Movement but without the constraints imposed by the Church's Roman hierarchy or its Canon Law. Some of those former members have joined the Maryknoll Affiliates. The Chi Rho Movement could be another expression of the Maryknoll spirit but wish no formal affiliation with the Maryknoll Society. Those who just want to be part of a Network would simply be part of the Chi Rho Network which would promote a variety of projects decided upon by those more closely associated with the Chi Rho Movement.

A symbol of Maryknoll over the decades has been the first two Greek letters of the name of Christ in Greek, chi and rho, combined into one symbol indicated below. I do not believe that the chi rho symbol is exclusive to the

Maryknoll Society alone since it often used as a symbol of Christianity in general. This symbol is a powerful reminder of the mission of Christianity to proclaim Good News to the nations but with a new understanding of the sacramental dimension of all world cultures and religions that express the common human search for an authentic spiritual life. The mission of Christianity and Catholicism to proclaim the Good News is not the sole possession of any one organization or society but rather the ongoing challenge presented to each generation to embody this missionary call into the national and global structures which typify the age in which we live. We now live in a New Age compared to that of our founders, Fathers Price and Walsh and Molly Rogers, Sister Mary Rogers. The growth of global interconnectedness has changes the concept of mission in the twenty first century. The Field Afar is no longer Afar but often found among immigrant populations in most of our major urban areas anywhere in the world. The structures of injustice are not limited to any one culture or area of the world but often are found rooted in global economic or political institutions and forces that must be challenged across many cultures and nations. Today the Good News must be proclaimed in conjunction with other people of good will if it is to be a true leaven within the global society that control most of the economic, financial and political structures dominating our era. We need an ever expanding network or movement toward a better world to which the Chi Rho Movement could contribute and attract the next generation who are in schools and colleges today.

Over the past ten years I have been involved with the development of Global Ministries University (www.globalministriesuniversity.org), an Online ecumenical and interreligious training program that has served many of the Roman Catholic women priests in the United States. My work has been similar to that of Roy Bourgeois but more focused on providing an educational structure for women who were seeking official recognition for their priestly roles.

My wife and I have also been part of the early leadership of the Federation of Christian Ministries (www.federationofchristianministries.org) which was founded to support new forms of ministry and community in 1973 and now has over 400 members. Both Global Ministries University and the Federation of Christian Ministries have continued to develop and flourish with funding coming primarily from those associated with these movements and not from any formal organization affiliated with the official structure of the Catholic Church.

Many of us who came out of the Vatican II era of the Roman Catholic Church were inspired by its proclamations and decrees recognizing a new openness to other people of good will and to other ecclesial bodies as well as the inherent spiritual integrity of non-Christian religions.

The article which I wrote drew extensively from one of the great missionaries of the twentieth century, Dom Bede Griffith. Unfortunately, many of the wonderful initiatives which resulted from the spirit of Vatican II have been slowly constricted, constrained or eliminated in favor of a restoration of the past structures and theology of the Roman Church.

In order to protect and expand the Maryknoll Movement, I believe we need to discover a new paradigm and use the contemporary technologies at our disposal to spread this movement. The movement also needs a global spirituality that encompasses other spiritual traditions through ongoing dialogue with them. Presently a group of us are working with one of the most important Islamic movements in the world, the Gulen Movement, which began only about 30 years ago in Turkey under the inspiration of a Turkish imam, Fethullah Gulen. This movement has spread to over 100 countries and created over 1000 schools and universities. It is very similar to the movement fostered by the Jesuits beginning in the period of the Counter Reformation and led to the formation of high schools and universities throughout much of the world. I have studied the Gulen Movement over the past two years and collaborated with them on several types of educational projects. I feel that the Chi Rho Movement could work in a collaborative manner with this movement as an important example of collaboration and dialogue between leaders in Christianity and Islam. We also have started a project with the leading Muslim university in the world, Al Azhar University in Cairo which was founded in the tenth century and trains many of the future Muslim leaders in the world. We have started a dialogue program with members of the faculty of this university utilizing social media technology. I only mention these projects as examples of what we can accomplish with minimal funding yet creative use of the technologies available to us today. Since I live in Silicon Valley and teach many classes using Online and Internet based technologies, I see the potential for using these technologies to link ever widening networks of people who want to be part of a new world order which Christianity has historically called the Kingdom of God or world order exhibiting the structures of peace and justice.

The Chi Rho Movement would have as one of its aims the engagement of Christians with Muslims throughout the world in a dialogue process. My original paper focused more on the relationship of Christianity with eastern religions such as Hinduism. A current book that I have written with John Raymaker, PhD, a missionary to Japan and

expert in the philosophical theology of Bernard Lonergan, sets forth some of the philosophical and theological principles that could become part of a Vatican Three ecumenical council that would meet jointly with key members of the major world religions. The title of the book is *Steps Toward Vatican III: Catholics Pathfinding a Global Spirituality with Islam and Buddhism* (University Press of America: 2008).

If you are interested in pursuing further the themes that I have outline in my original paper and the thoughts that I have outline in this paper, I would like to propose a virtual gathering using one of the meeting technologies popular in the business world today. I will be asking some of those who attended the seminar I led at Maryknoll and others interested in the vision that I put forth to help establish an agenda for the meeting which will take place over your computer and have the capability of allowing each participant to contribute to the meeting via a head set or a speaker and camera embedded into your computer.

If there is an interest in such a virtual meeting, I will let you know some possible dates and times when we can meet over the Internet. If you do not have a copy of my original paper on the Maryknoll Movement, I will be happy to email a copy to you.

Fraternally,

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Alumni Homecoming Event September 2011

Gene Toland Notes for Presentation on Panel on *Maryknoll 21 Century*

Introduction-I have no crystal ball ...who does? ...on what the Maryknoll movement will be like in 50 years...even if it will still be alive and kicking. What I will offer today comes out of three major experiences- my recent ministry background in the past ten years in group processes for organizational renewal, multiple conversations with members of the Maryknoll family in last two years, and the experience of the Maryknoll family of communities in Bolivia. Hopefully, we can have a lively discussion on the topic and together catch a hint at least of where the Spirit of God is calling this missionary movement of 100 years in this new century and what part we might play in responding to that call. While I draw mainly on my experience as a Maryknoll Society member, what I say I believe speaks to all three Maryknoll organizations.

I. Where we came from -The Movement is launched

The Maryknoll Movement began in 1911 and took shape with a nucleus of two organizations, the CFMSA and the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Dominic (MM Fathers –later added “Brothers” to popular name in the 1980s). Both organizations articulated their particular charisms in light of the context and perceived needs to do mission of the time. A time in which the church was still living out of a classical model of society embedded in a dualistic philosophical framework that had dominated church life since the 4th century.

The CFMSA specifically fell within the paradigm of a national clerical mission society (after morphing from a national seminary for foreign missions) dedicated to the “foreign” missions, or mission “*ad gentes*”, which at the time implied leaving your own country to go to another, one that was characterized as “pagan” and poor and perceived as in need of the message of Jesus and the presence of the Catholic Church (and the benefits of western civilization). The image of the missionary was one who left to spend his or her life among the pagan poor to bring the Good News through preaching, the Sacraments, social assistance and incorporation into the one true church. It was a vocation full of adventure, daring and good will, often accompanied with a good intention to bring the good things of Christianity and a fully civilized European or US culture to ones less developed.

II. Changing with the times

For most of their 100 year history these Maryknoll organizations adapted their approaches in accord with changing theologies of mission and changes in the context in which they exercised mission. Up to the 1960s these adaptations were relatively moderate and did not challenge too drastically the understanding of the specific charisms of either organization.

The events and shifts of the 1960s and beyond changed that.

Vatican II provoked a radical rethinking of the meaning of God, Church, and mission. One fruit of that rethinking has been the incorporation of laity into the forefront of mission activity exercising their baptismal call to participation in the mission of God in the world. Within the Maryknoll mission movement emerged what is now the Maryknoll Lay Mission program and the Maryknoll Affiliates. Other fruits within Maryknoll circles are a deepened commitment to inculturation of the Gospel, Orbis Books, the MOGC, and more creative ways of relating to local churches to promote their responsibility to live out the missionary nature of the Church.

Throughout this history one can discern the call of God to respond more and more appropriately and effectively to the changing needs of the time. (Cf. fine reflection of Larry Egan '64)⁷ That call continues and I believe is even more insistent today in challenging us to let go of past approaches and structures that once served well but today block the taking on of fresh ways to participate in God's all encompassing mission in the world to make real the dream of God, or as Jesus spoke of it, the Reign of God, in the world. Charisms change as contexts change; old ways must die if new ones are to emerge. It is the law of the Paschal Mystery. Celebrating 100 years of missionary service is an opportunity to give thanks for the past, but as well to be open to fresh understandings of our identity and charisms if we would continue as a vital energy in mission in this century. There is no reason for a mission institute like the CFMSA not to die if it has served well its purpose for a determined period of history, unless it reshapes and resituates itself for a new age.

⁷ Cf. also reflections by John Keegan and Gerry Grudzen on the future of a Maryknoll mission movement.

III. Change or get out of the way

Very few organizations that were founded 100 years ago still survive and if they do they have taken steps to reshape and resituate themselves to respond to the exigencies of changing contexts and challenges. Any successful institutional transformation has not just revamped the practices of an organization but reframed its core sense of identity. And it is that fact that frightens and causes major resistance to transformative change in any organization. But not to face those fears and resistances squarely is a sure path to non-relevance, stagnation and death.

- IBM 100 years old; Know what makes us who we are- and what new approach is appropriate to respond to new challenges: is not about who we become for a new age, it is about what we left behind.
- Kodak – over 100 years old but recently stopped making film, redesigning itself for the digital age.
- Columbus Ohio Health Association- a 100 years-plus association, fewer members, doctors' frustration about lack of quality relations with patients. After a two-year process produced a new association of doctors, patients, receptionists, nurses, with both actual and virtual spaces to interact.

IV. Sense of Mission has changed since 1911 (obvious); but even more so since 1980

As Maryknollers celebrate these Centennial years we are called to name and celebrate the gifts of the past century of mission. We have the opportunity to identify key characteristics and challenges of that journey that can serve for the next 100 years, and more importantly, to let go of what is not needed or helpful to be a vital missionary force within the US church and in other areas of the globe. This is an exercise in truly surrendering and trusting in God's spirit. As one Maryknoller puts it- "*the image that describes our present situation is that of the pruning of the vines (Maryknoll) by the vinedresser (the LORD of history). Pruning is painful but necessary so that more fruit may be harvested. Renewal calls for much faith. Faith means letting go, letting go of images of renewal that are our images and not God's. ...the renewal that awaits Maryknoll may not be what we can imagine. The new Maryknoll that God has in mind may not be anywhere near what we may have in mind*". (E. Dumas)

But I do not believe the word "renewal" alone speaks to the challenge God throws at us through the signs of today's times. For me what is called for is "radical conversion", "profound restructuring and reframing of our identity and presence in the church and world". It is a question of survival not rearranging furniture; it is a question of fitting into a new era not clinging to outmoded expressions and structures that were created for another age that now has passed. (Investing in selling postage stamps is not going to keep you in business too long today.)

- More fitting images might be--*when it's time for the caterpillar to change, it is not to become a better caterpillar (to jump higher or run faster) but to be transformed so that the butterfly can emerge, or as Dave Smith offers, "another dramatic analogy – like bamboo that spreads through shoots under the soil, there was the original bamboo (Maryknoll, NY) that has grown tall but is now very old and almost dead, other shoots have sprung up from the original but they too are now very old and are in the process of dying (Maryknoll in Africa, Asia and Latin America). The old system of bamboo still has enough energy in it to push up one last new shoot: Twenty-first Century Maryknoll."* (Note from Dave to Toland 9-15-11)

V. First recognize what has changed

The reality and context for participating in mission has changed drastically since 1911 and even more so since the 1980s.

(Epoch of cultural tsunami that has changed paradigms...time of crisis, confusion, more questions than answers, time of searching, and walking together in increasingly pluralistic societies.)

1. Sociologically we recognize-

- The world envisioned by Vatican II is gone. Some would say its vision of society is naïve for today's world. (J. Comblin)
 - (e.g. Think globalization; 9/11; pluralistic societies; quantum physics; new cosmology that incorporate ancient cosmologies; a postmodern world of the electronic revolution- Facebook, i phones and i pads, IMs; Think robots;; cut-throat economics with incredible gaps between rich and poor and widening; think mobilization of social movements; the age of the feminine and decline of the

patriarchal; think same-sex marriages and a variety of understanding of what is family; think most of world is urban and even rural areas are being urbanized by internet communication; think migrations at all levels and acceleration of life everywhere to keep up and thus wide-spread exhaustion, sense of isolation, disconnectedness, deep search for life's meaning, for a sense of "home" and belonging...)

- The "New Age" is the real age- holistic, deep roots in human relationship to earth as part of a whole: less anthropologic centered;
- The word , "foreign" carries connotation of colonial; people and cultures that are less than "us"; domination of the others; within a world church the word "foreign" has less meaning today than "global". (Why not – the Catholic *Global* Mission Society of America?)
- Wider acceptance among the young for tolerance of diversity of religious beliefs, life styles, etc.
- Governments, NGOs are taking on responsibility for social works that before were in hands of missionaries
- In the USA there are new challenges to mission and evangelization that were not present 100 yrs ago
 - 12 million non-documented immigrants.
 - Within the Church-confusion on what, where and why mission.
 - Most urgent areas lacking a living out the Kingdom and its values are in the north, not the south.
- Collaborate or die is the operative phrase today to succeed
 - The results of GE's ambitious Innovation Barometer are in—polled from 1,000 business leaders in a dozen countries—revealing the three main ways the rules of innovation are changing around the globe.
 - Innovation in the 21st century requires a new blueprint. One that topples the top-down approach and engenders collaboration among companies, countries, and communities.
 - The way companies and organizations innovate in the 21st century will be *totally different* than the way they've innovated in the past.
 - Partnership is sacrosanct: innovation is about partnership rather than a single organization's success: there was a time when we believed A single organization or company could solve the world's problems on our own. That's just not how the world works anymore.
 - Individuals and smaller enterprises can be just as important to the innovative process as the big guys: learning to embrace creativity wherever we find it. To effect change, finding solutions that work at a local level is key... Create prototypes at local area levels that could serve as global structures.

2. Theological and ecclesial realities we now accept-

- Mission is everywhere on all six continents because God is in mission everywhere;
- Church is everywhere, local churches have major responsibility to be in mission; now mission is two-way exchange of experience of God in lives, cultures, histories;
- The Church as the People of God of all the baptized.
- All the baptized are called to participate actively in the mission of God;
- Emergence of multiple Associations of the Faithful (People of God model, "...*bearers of unexpected and powerful newness are the response given by the Holy Spirit to this critical challenge of an increasingly secularized world.*" (President of Council for Laity, 20-6)
- Mission is to reveal and live the Kingdom of God, to offer spaces for personal relationship with Jesus and his message; to dialogue with the poor, cultures and other religions, to build bridges between cultures, religions and churches.

- New consciousness of cosmos challenges way we have related to each other, to creation, and images of God, of humanity, creation...
- Bishops of Latin America: *Aparecida*- outmoded structures of church hinder mission, we are called to be in a state of permanent mission among unevangelized baptized and others (what is meaning of “mission”? / Asia: mission is dialogue: Africa, USA???)
- Credibility issue of clergy due to sex abuse scandals is real.
- Tensions within the Church more and more open...ordination of women, bioethics, authority, and there is a desperate effort by church hierarchies to hold down the ecclesial fort....missing challenge to provide mystical, prophetic spaces of creative spiritual energy so needed in today’s world.
- There are fewer members for clerical mission institutes dedicated exclusively to “foreign” overseas mission
- BUT there are ample vocations to mission commitment world-wide among the laity exercising their “priestly” call of baptism, but these are still subordinated to clerical control and concern to increase clerical vocations to priesthood. (Cf. growth of Associations of the Faithful in past 30 years...and Bennett’s Law- *the more clerical is the leadership of a church, the less effective is evangelization; the more leadership is in hands of the laity, more effective are efforts of evangelization.* Reinventing American Protestantism).

3. Maryknoll Society, Congregation, Association, Affiliates

- Maryknollers at end of 2016 – 2020- not growing to any significant extent when combined with attrition due to deaths....the pool for a critical mass of energy in any of the organizations is not promising.
 - Cf. # and ages of Society, Congregation, Association members

Society members at end of 2011 and 2020?

Under 35	5
Under 40	3
Under 45	0
Under 50	3
Under 55	5
Under 60	16
<u>Under 65</u>	<u>29</u>
TOTAL	61

- Fear of dying; denial and holding on to past at all costs;
- Less energy
- Illusions (L Lewis)
 - CFMSA is the mission ad gentes instrument of the US church?
 - We can only change if there is 100 % agreement of our members?
 - Vocations are out there...just need to find way to tap them?
 - Still valid being a national mission clerical society in a world church?
 - We can make it alone...just have faith? The Spirit will not abandon us.

“... that institutions within the Church must start from the presupposition that they do not enjoy this support (of the Holy Spirit) forever. Must they not take the possibility into account, precisely because they have their origin in the work of the spirit, that they may die and become extinct?... The fact that a movement disappears, that it is as if it were pensioned off and

that it dies, indeed that it becomes forgotten, does not say anything against its having its origin in the work of the Spirit.” J. Metz cited by J. Keegan

VI. Listen to the future

So in light of such a rapidly changing world, the question is -how does a 100-year old missionary movement open itself to hear the call of the spirit of the God of history so to grasp how to participate faithfully, creatively, and boldly in the mission of that God in a post-modern world of the 21st century?

-Within a People of God paradigm of church,

-Does it make sense to have three separate MM organizations each with own infrastructure for recruiting, formation, maintenance, sending?

-Really a need for a mission society (that is not a religious order) of solely celibate priests and lay brothers?

I believe the three core organizations that make up the Maryknoll movement plus the Affiliates have the experience, raw material, components, energy, and desire to respond to that challenging call. But does it have the guts and wisdom to do so? It will mean hard choices soon, for the window of opportunity is closing. It is a matter of doing something that any one of the groups cannot do alone.

VII. Choices, choices, choices...:

1. Stay the way we are –three groups going separate ways hoping that things will turn around if we keep to “official future”- do what we always have done and things will work out.
 - a. Like three pieces of a puzzle on separate tables.
 - b. The Society- an agency for a small group of priests and brothers (60-80 with about 20% under 55 years of age in 2030) who go overseas and “do mission” as they determine it. ??? ...or something “bigger than the Society”???
2. Or engage in a process of collaboration towards a transformation to new life—structures, mission approaches, etc.appropriate to new context of this century. Collaboration with whom? With the other Maryknoll organizations? With other missionary organizations? With a combination of both?

Operative words and phrases: Mission of God, holistic, relationships with others and creation; deep spiritual roots within a whole, Jesus as one who shows the Way, collaboration, the baptized protagonists of a mystical and prophetic mission approach in all sectors of society, ecumenical partnerships,...

VIII. The Maryknoll movement in the 21 century-what would it look like?

Imagine it, design it, and create it!

Imagine: a relatively small nucleus of three experienced mission organizations of men and women, religious and lay, married and single, and/or celibate and priests and deacons, sharing their skills and resources with a dynamic synergy of one movement to facilitate and to sustain with a vibrant spirituality and on-going formation hundreds of baptized to exercise their vocation in the mission of God in the world in the sphere of activity they are already engaged in as part of this vital mission movements in many continents and across a variety of cultures and churches.

Steps for **designing** to get there:

A. Co initiate with all stakeholders in one room- CFMSA, Congregation, MLKLM, Affiliates, sponsors, employees, collaborators, US laity and clerics...to agree on a common intention to create something new out of what now exists....what it will be will emerge from the journey. (For example- as a start to create a tighter working together of the three MM organizations and more dynamic inclusion of the many potential close partners that are related to all three groups)

B. Need a coming together in some form of process with the members of each of the three MM organizations and some others to spark a synergy of partners to create a vital contribution to mission not possible by any one of them alone.

- Attitudes of empty self of and put aside old identities and patterns, fears, prejudices of past experiences of cooperation and collaboration efforts.
- Listen to everything; allow all ideas and dreams to surface w/o judgment.
- Open selves to what is emerging that respond to the challenges of 21 century.
- A certain number of members from the three Maryknoll organizations would enter a process over a period of maybe 3- 5 years to design a model for a closer partnership arrangement than now exists among the 3 organizations. Not all members need take part...according to the 80/20 principle perhaps only a relatively small number would be interested and willing to embark on this venture....but they would be the ones with the energy and age to carry it into the next 10-20- years. At some point some others outside the official memberships would be brought into the process – affiliates, sponsors, local US and other church representatives, potential ecumenical partners, etc. The principle being that all those who could be potential stakeholders take part in the creation of this venture of reshaping a fresh missionary movement of Maryknollers.

LA Region 2010 Assembly: we propose to the leaderships of all four of the Maryknoll organizations that they initiate and promote dialogue forums of members from each of our organizations. These forums would aim to seek more creative and effective ways of relating to each other, and configuring our structures to enhance collaboration and partnership on decisions that affect the common good of our organizations and promote among us a strong vital mission movement while respecting the core identity, autonomy, charisms and life- style of each entity. These forums would include examining the experience of other groups who have entered into similar processes.

C. In the process of **re-creating and reshaping** this fresh vital and sustainable MM movement some key tasks would be:

- To seek clarity of the movement's ID and mission, ...in light of challenges of a new epoch;
- To articulate a concrete common spirituality that reflects a mystical and prophetic mission outreach with roots in the Maryknoll history and traditions of doing mission. (The Maryknoll "touch"...on the frontiers, comfortable at the margins (society and church), pushing the envelope, trying things out as experiments, the odd cousin or clown at family gathering of the church...always asking new questions that at times shake up the regular table talk...)
- To develop a mission approach and structures that promote the baptized as protagonists in mission living out their baptismal call to participate in the mission of God in the world, living and promoting spaces of the Kingdom of God...in all the local churches where Maryknollers do ministry including the US.
- Thus the MM Movement would be primarily missionaries accompanying the excluded of the earth with capacity and skills to convoke and provide spaces of contemplation, prayer, support circles for baptized in mission.
 - The MM reputation has been a focus on the social and prophetic that now needs to be deeply complemented with the mystical.
 - To create and maintain spaces of reflection, prayer, mutual support, and creativity for baptized in mission. To be promoters, facilitators, mentors of a spirituality of service out of a personal relationship with Jesus the missionary...the face of God in history.
 - to provide laity with skills in ministry of listening, in dialogue, in ways of creating spaces of inclusion for works for common good, for reflection, for growing in own spirituality fitting for times we live in, in times of pluralism, diversity, engaged in the new *areopagos* or cultural and social situations, grounded in the social teachings,
 - to provide formation for -new actors in mission for 21 c- the marginalized, poor, laity in social movements like ecological, indigenous, women, political, ...professional, scientific, tech-

nological worlds...within and outside US church...in a global electronically connected world of less geographical boundaries.

D. Thus major challenges-

- The renewing and strengthening of partnership relationships among the Congregation and Association, society and the Affiliates is the major and urgent challenge. Unless we engage this question the ability of any of our organizations to be a vital missionary force in the coming years is seriously in doubt. The Society, Congregation and the Maryknoll Association of the Faithful are challenged to seek much stronger ties of partnership if any are to survive with vitality in the years ahead. There is a crucial window of opportunity at this time to deepen what is the common perception of the people who support us and many in the US church-that we are indeed one family of mutual support and partnership.
- to review present works in light of new challenges for mission (non- geographical social/cultural situations)and reorder priorities of personnel and other resources
- The CFMSA challenged to broaden conditions for membership in the Society, enabling local people to become regional associates, opening up and facilitating alternative ways of being in mission as well as life-long commitments,

IX. What a possible structure of MM movement in 21 century could look like in 2016

- One Option: All three groups would initiate a process to eventually incorporate members of the Society and Congregation into the Association that in its statutes as an Association of the Faithful anticipates memberships of various charisms.
- OR Option two: each of the three MM organizations could maintain its identity and autonomy but there could be a coordinating /clearing house board with specific responsibilities and functions that have been relegated to it by the three organizations and the MM Affiliates. This could be in some form of a federation model. Such tasks as-
 1. Working towards an agreement of the vision and mission of the family-movement, joint mission focus areas, common pool for assignments, pooling of some resources, in light of a process to discern the challenges for new epoch as I alluded to above.
 2. Promoting local dialogue forums of members from each of the Maryknoll organizations. These forums would aim to seek more creative and effective ways of relating to each other, and configuring our structures to enhance collaboration and partnership on decisions that affect the common good of our organizations and promote among us a strong vital mission movement while respecting the core identity, autonomy, charisms and life- style of each entity. These forums would include examining the experience of other groups who have entered into similar processes.
 - For instance a major dimension would be a mission movement that promotes the engagement of baptized in mission through the creation and maintaining of physical and virtual spaces of mindfulness, contemplation/action for prophetic witness to the presence of God's Kingdom in the world.
 - Some aspects that could characterize this family-mission movement could be-
 - It would include all the charisms of the church- baptized, married and single, clerical and religious (a clerical institute; a religious congregation, and an association of the faithful. The three fundamental Maryknoll organizations would provide a substructure (like a ground bass in a *passacaglia*, a Baroque musical form based on continuous variations over a ground bass), or a sustainable constant sustainable base to maintain a movement of a variety of expressions of mission engagement. (A wider support circle of the movement could include affiliates, sponsors, and other partner organization with similar values and even be ecumenical, or specifically for circles of young people.

- A key instrument for cohesion, communication, exchange of ideas and networking could be a type of web based virtual social network for “members” only.
- A key agenda within this process would be working towards agreements on shared resources, responsibilities for fund raising, recruitment, formation and capacity training, on certain common collaborative focus areas in different regions, mission education efforts,

An example of one model of many contemporary religious movements is the Chemin Neuf community

http://www.chemin-neuf.org/qui-sommes-nous-en/net-for-god?set_language=en&cl=en

Sum up- open to discussion.

>Celebrate a rich past

>Be open to a future that calls to a re-creation

>Decide- do we do it alone on separate routes or come together to explore what we can do together that is not possible alone...be the synergistic core of a fresh dynamic mission movement that sparks the engagement in mission of baptized in the US church and other churches across the globe.

>First step is to create forums that allow for multiple ideas and honest open conversation about a common future.

Thank you.

Letting Go
Fr. Emile Dumas ('67)

A veteran hiker got distracted and his feet slipped over the edge of a cliff. On his way down in desperation he reached out and was able to grab on to a bush protruding from the wall of the cliff. Hanging there in mid-air he began to call out for help. "Help! Anybody there? Help me! God, are you there? Help me, please!" A voice was heard from the clouds in the sky. "What do you want me to do?" The hiker pleaded, "Help me! I want to live." The voice said to the hiker, "Let go of the bush!" There were several moments of silence before the hiker cried out, "Is there anybody else up there?"

This hiker's dilemma speaks volumes to me of Maryknoll as it begins its 2nd hundred years of mission. Changes of cataclysmic proportions have and continue to shake the foundations of the Society. A tsunami of social changes has taken the Society in directions it has not chosen.

Changes call for letting go and letting go is never easy. Letting go calls for enormous trust and courage. Letting go calls us to let go of the familiar, to let go of what is safe and secure, to let go of what was and is. A major obstacle to letting go, to trust and courage, is fear, fear of losing what we have, fear of the unknown.

From what I know of Maryknoll's Founders, Frs. Walsh and Price, I sense no fear in them. They had no idea that Maryknoll would evolve the way it did and become involved in mission in Asia, Africa, Latin America. It could have flopped. But it didn't. They had tremendous faith and trust in God. They were OPEN to what God had planned for Maryknoll.

Considering the demographics of the Society (dwindling number of members, ageing, diminishment of energy and bodily functions) letting go may be more than what many members are able to deal with. Even if many members cannot invest in the letting go necessary for renewal to happen it is vital that they be OPEN (like the Society's Founders) to God's future for Maryknoll. Trust and courage of all Society members are vital for Maryknoll to function in the coming 100 years. Like our Founders we have no idea what the future holds for Maryknoll. If we have the trust and courage of our Founders to be OPEN to what God wants of Maryknoll, who knows what amazing graces await us in the coming 100 years. Could they be even more amazing than the first 100 years? For those who trust in God all things are possible. If only we can let go...

Courtesy *Maryknoll News*, September/October 2011

Seventy percent of the population of Haiti is 30 years and under. 70% of the population of the Maryknoll Society is 70 years and over. There is only one Society member under the age of 30. There are 44 Society members under the age of 60.

The above information, food for thought, is not meant to threaten us or send us into a spiral of despair or depression. It is information we need to take into account as we attempt to bring about renewal of the Society and of Maryknoll. The above are essential pieces of the environment in which the Maryknoll Society finds itself operating.

The conclusions I draw from the above food for thought, information are:

- When it comes to renewal of the Society it is essential that we think big and understand Maryknoll in an inclusive manner, as a movement, with the Maryknoll Society (the Congregation, the Association of the Faithful), a band of celibate men committed to life-long overseas mission as priests and Brothers, as vital but not exclusive.
- The present canonical structure and constitution of the Maryknoll Society will remain with some possible changes to adjust to present realities.
- The focus of renewal should be on mission and not Maryknoll, meaning we should carry on the commitment and zeal of our Founders for mission, for the Kingdom, as we face the environment of 2011 as they responded to the ecclesial environment of 1911.

Little did Maryknoll's Founders know back in 1911 how Maryknoll would grow into what we now know as Maryknoll. Their enterprise could just as easily have floundered and failed. It didn't.

Little do we know what our efforts at renewal will produce. What we do know is that the zeal for mission, for the Kingdom, that sustained Maryknoll's Founders in the twentieth century is just as vital for us in the twenty-first century.

After the joint retreat on the legacy of Maryknoll's Founders I have no doubt that they are with us as we try to keep the flame of mission alive today in 2011 as they did in 1911. I can hear Bishop James Anthony Walsh whispering, "Think big! Think bigger than the Society! Beware of parochialism!"

Courtesy *Maryknoll News*, July/August 2011.