Voices of Compassion

Building Bridges of Faith
MKLM Mission Statement

Maryknoll Lay Missioners is a Catholic organization inspired by the mission of Jesus to live and work in poor communities in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, responding to basic needs and helping to create a more just and compassionate world.

Contact Us

To visit us, learn more about becoming a lay missioner or to support us, please visit our website www.mklm.org

Find Us on Facebook.

Maryknoll Lay Missioners meets all 20 charity standards of the Better Business Bureau.

Maryknoll Lay Missioners is a proud member of the National Catholic Development Conference.

Dear Friends,

We are a lay Catholic community called through baptism to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, crossing boundaries of culture, nationality and faith to join our lives with impoverished and oppressed people of the earth.

That is the first sentence of Maryknoll Lay Missioners’ vision statement. I think it is the heart and soul of what this organization hopes to accomplish.

Our missioners build bridges – they are built on faith, and generosity, and they are built across boundaries and nationalities. The bridges being built by our missioners in Africa, in Central and South America, in Asia, span all the way back to us – those of us who live our vocations here at home.

Part of being a missioner is taking your skills and your faith and your love, and sharing them with the people and the communities who need us. But there is another part of being a missioner – sharing the realities of those less fortunate with us at home.

The Gospel calls for transparency. The generous men and women who have answered the call and gone forth live that transparency every day, and in so doing they become a part of the communities they serve. When that happens, we are blessed to be able to experience those communities – in the joyful times, as well as the sorrowful – through our missioners.

In this issue of Voices of Compassion, you will read about some of the missioners who are building bridges between us, the Church here at home, and some of the places around the world that
truly need our help. Our missioners in the field, those of us here at Maryknoll Lay Missioners’ Center, and all of you who support the work we do with your prayers and generosity – all of us together are building a global community, a universal church.

“She was only two years younger than I… I imagined myself living in her home… what a difficult life.”

One of the programs we have at Maryknoll Lay Missioners is called Friends Across Borders. It gives parishes, schools, organizations and individuals the chance to do mission outreach overseas. A young man named Max recently returned from a trip to El Salvador, and he offered the following reflection about a young woman he encountered.

“Her name was Yeimi. She was a 16 year old girl who lived with her grandparents in the community. After a half hour or so of conversation, it was time to go, and it wasn’t until I had returned to the retreat center that my eyes were open. ‘Why do I live better than Yeimi?’ ‘What gives me the right to a better life than her?’ She was only two years younger than I… I imagined myself living in her home… what a difficult life.”

We are blessed. You, me, all of us – we are all very blessed. Along with that blessing comes a responsibility, and that is to try and walk with those less fortunate; offering our prayers when they are needed and our assistance when we can.

Our faith is building bridges. I hope you enjoy reading about them, and I hope it inspires your own faith as we draw nearer to the holy time of year that is approaching.

In mission,

Sam Stanton

P.S. Please visit www.mklm.org if you would like to learn more about Friends Across Borders, our Missioners, or any of the work we do. We have just redesigned our website so we can share information with you more easily and we have included new and exciting videos for you to view!
Faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others. . .

–Pope Francis

One of the core values of Maryknoll Lay Missioners is Building Bridges with the Church in the United States. When we send someone on mission, that person becomes a representative of the U.S. Church, and the Church supports our work. We show respect for our supporters by communicating to them about our mission experiences, and by carefully stewarding the resources they pass onto us.
We contribute to the understanding, respect and connectedness of all peoples. We are building a global community – one where we look at all of God’s children as our neighbors, not only those who live next door. The people we serve, and our missioners in the field want to share their lives and experiences with those of us who remain at home.

Donna Stiglmeier has been in Bolivia since 2011. After twenty years of working for non-profit organizations, she came to us. She has enjoyed the common thread of economic justice and bridge building throughout her professional life, and that joy has continued as a Maryknoll Lay Missioner. She recently talked about what it was like to come home and share her experiences with others.

“With my feet planted in Bolivia, I returned to the United States and shared stories from a new and forming vantage point….We can learn about Bolivia through the United States, and the Bolivian reality can teach people in the U.S. to re-commit to freedom for all people around the world, and make manifest God’s invitation to love each other…wherever we find ourselves. Bridges are strongest when the feet are firmly planted in both places, but my Bolivian feet are still getting strengthened to complement my ‘United States feet…’ ”

Kim Fischer, who is on mission as a language teacher, is having a similar experience in Brazil. Kim is in Sao Paulo with her husband and two year old son Christopher, and has been since last year. She spoke of her experience at World Youth Day:

“When World Youth Day took place in Rio de Janeiro, several of the Brazil missioners were fortunate to be able to accompany Brazilian pilgrims on the Jornada. At the same time, we kept in contact with youth teams in the U.S. that have previously supported us,
do not attend primary school... it has grown to be a vital connection with new friends in ways we never could have imagined.”

James Havey is building another kind of bridge – the kind that helps marginalized people within their own communities feel safe and secure. Since last year, James has been working to combat sex slavery in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In order to do so, he has brought together other nonprofit organizations. His work is difficult, and he draws on the inspiration of other missioners, both past and present, for strength.

“If change is really to be had, it requires unyielding devotion and passion. Charlie, taking years to develop a whole new form of sign language... Maria, spending hours developing lesson plans... Sami, updating them on the events of the Jornada, and exchanging prayers and support. In this way, World Youth Day was celebrated around the world, even if people couldn’t physically travel to the celebration city.”

As Catherine Heinhold (another lay missioner in Brazil) said, “My own feet are planted in two places now – in the U.S. Church (which nurtured, formed and trained me) and the Brazilian Church (which welcomes, challenges and is an important community). I can’t live with my feet in these two places without building bridges, communicating the reality here to those back home...”

Our missioners often encounter social injustices in their ministries. Through her work, and the sharing of that work with people here, she is building bridges between individuals and on which justice will continue to travel.

Sometimes our missioners build bridges between individuals and communities with cultural or religious differences. That is one of the things Judy Walter is doing in Kenya. In addition to her ministry as a Registered Nurse in charge of St. Patrick’s Bangladesh Clinic, Judy works with the Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics, in an effort to bring together different faiths, languages and traditions.

“Besides my ministry in health care, I also feel very committed to this Interfaith initiative,” she writes. “I am mentor to a group which consists of one Muslim and two Christians. [In an effort to come together] They have chosen to work in the slum where our clinic is located, and the problem they have chosen to address is the youth who...
James echoes the sentiment of all of our missioners. All of them want to share their work with you. The responsibility to offer people ways to participate in mission is assumed by both new and experienced missioners. We offer a partnership in our work, inviting you to contribute to our mission both through your prayers and financial support, and we invite you to form real, life-giving relationships with the communities we serve.

As David Rosser, a missioner in Tanzania said after he was paid a visit by a couple from home, “The opportunity to share the work and concern with fresh, caring faces gave an extra boost to missioners here… we hope they were able to bring back that same enthusiasm and share it with their church community in Oregon!”

Later in this Voices of Compassion you will read the story of one of our recent FAB participants on her trip to El Salvador.

Those are the bridges we are building.

It would be selfish of us to not invite you all to share in mission with us and see for yourself how hard we work to help to create a more just and compassionate world.

We invite you to visit us in Cambodia

We strive to grow together as a global Christian Community in Tanzania

making sure that the Bung Tum Pun church community can receive basic health care… seeing how these men and women devote their entire lives to putting others first, I am being transformed even further. It would be selfish not to invite you all to share in these experiences…”

One of the ways Maryknoll Lay Missioners is building bridges with the U.S. Church is through our Friends Across Borders program. We recognize that not everyone can commit to a long term mission experience, so in 1994 we began FAB which is a short term mission outreach opportunity.

James extends an invitation to all of you to participate.

“Through Friends Across Borders you, the reader, have the opportunity to come and see for yourself what we as missioners do everyday throughout the world. This magazine and its stories may be just words on a page, but there is a possibility of those words becoming a true and life giving reality. I know that my home Archdiocese of Cincinnati is planning a trip to Cambodia in 2015; perhaps you would like to come to?”

We invite you to visit us in Cambodia

We strive to grow together as a global Christian Community in Tanzania
Dear Friends of Maryknoll Lay Missioners,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Maryknoll Lay Missioners, our missioners and especially those whom we serve, I am proud to present you with our 2012 Financial Statement.

Each one of you who supports us is a vital member of our mission-sending community. You are absolutely critical in making it possible for us to call forth and send committed Catholic lay men and women to Asia, Africa and Latin America each year.

Thank You! You have invested in an essential venture of our Global Catholic Church: Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We are excited about our future and hope that you will share in it with us. Please contact me if you would like further information about us and our mission work.

In the Mission of Christ,

Father Bill Vos, Chair, MKLM Board of Directors

mklmchair@gmail.com

MKLM Board of Directors:

Kathy Bond  Marjorie Humphrey  Mary Sue Smiaroski
Dave Cappellari  Frank Johnson  Sarah Welch
Charlie Dittmeier  Michael Noonan  Mark Wittenburg
David Dreiling  Rhonda Paver  Mike Wrob

Fr. Bill Vos, Chair, MKLM Board of Directors with students.

FINANCES
2012 Operating Income and Expenses

TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>General Public Support, Bequests, Foundation Support, &amp; Legacies</td>
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Support Services

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PROGRAM AND SUPPORT SERVICES EXPENSES TOTAL $9,194,155

NET ASSET BALANCE $801,339

** Transfer of property back to the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, Inc. for satisfaction of mortgage obligation.
Like many friends of Maryknoll Lay Missioners, Dave Cappellari came to know about us during a visit to the developing world. While there, he encountered some of our missioners, and was drawn to the work they were doing. Years after that initial encounter, Dave has visited many of our missions, and serves as a member of our Board of Directors.

“In San Salvador, Larry Parr works with the youth. He builds bridges through soccer, to keep them from joining gangs. Charlie Dittmeier’s work with the deaf in Cambodia, helping to develop and teach sign language… in each country you have four, or six, or eight missioners doing something different. Every project is unique. There is never a lack of need, and there is always something to fit a missioner’s individual talents. That’s why it’s so nice to go and see all the ways people spread Christ’s love.”

Through his visits to our mission sites, and his work here at home to spread the message about the work being done, Dave continues to help Maryknoll Lay Missioners build bridges from the field to the United States. And like all of us, Dave realizes that there are a number of organizations who need support. But there is one reason above all why Maryknoll Lay Missioners has a special place in Dave’s heart – the length and the depth of the commitment being made by our missioners.

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We build bridges on which justice travels

“With friends like Dave, people who dedicate their time and resources to learning more about us, our mission of building bridges between the United States and the developing world is made easier. There is nothing like seeing someone’s face when they experience a mission site for the first time. Hopefully many of you will get to have that experience one day, and help Maryknoll Lay Missioners continue being a builder of bridges.
What My FAB Trip Meant to Me

Maryknoll Lay Missioners works hard to establish and maintain relationships with local Churches throughout the United States. We have long lived in the spirit of Pope Francis’ words where he speaks of ‘the encounter’ with others. One of the ways we provide the opportunity for encounter is through our Friends Across Borders Program.

Pope Francis tells us: “The Church must step outside herself. To go where? To the outskirts of existence — she must step out. Jesus tells us: “Go into all the world! Go! Preach! Bear witness to the Gospel” (cf. Mk 16:15). . . In this “stepping out” it is important to be ready for encounter. For me this word is very important. Encounter with others. Why? Because faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others. . . with our faith we must create a “culture of encounter”, a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently, as well as those who hold other beliefs, who do not have the same faith. They all have something in common with us: they are images of God, they are children of God. Going out to meet everyone, without losing sight of our own position.” (5/18/13)

This past summer, one of our Friends Across Borders trips went to El Salvador. Tara, a young Catholic from Connecticut, was on that trip. She tells us of her encounter there:

As a young North American, I was frequently grabbed by the wrist and introduced to the volunteers at El Programa de Soya and the Church’s youth group. They would all welcome me with their innocent grins, and then continue to thank me for my presence. Our conversation would drift towards the duration of my stay, the reason for my visit, and would be brimming with quizzical eyes that yearned to understand the words of the other’s lips.

I was shocked by their hospitality towards me; I was shocked by their willingness to move past our nation’s tensions and look past the United States’s involvement in their civil war. Not only was I welcomed with open arms and an open heart, but I was told that I
am home. I realized the amount of
God in these amiable people. Each
displayed God’s forgiveness. Similar
to God, each demonstrated love
towards others of different races
and languages.

In Ann’s soya, I met a cheerful
and hilarious worker named Vilma
who has brighter eyes than you
would if you were a 40-something
year old single mother and
whispering brown eyes that
communicate more than Spanish
ever can. When she took my hand,
she gently placed a tiny black seed
into my palm and stated “Borla”.
Borla flowers blossom in loud blues
and purples while their stems grow
voraciously. She pointed at the plant
in the corner of the musty Church
room and lifted a single finger,
stating “uno”. It was then that I
realized that she was attempting
to explain to me that Borla flowers
develop from a single seed, stolen
or snatched by an admirer lucky
enough to behold it.

As I stood in the whirlwind of
shouted instructions and thoughtful
questions, I began to realize the power
of the Borla. I continue to dwell on
how such beautiful things can sprout
from a single object handed down
by another, and I continue to smile
in thought of its blossom. Surely,
Ann planted her seed by venturing
into the crowded and smog-filled
streets of El Salvador in order to apply
her education to a greater cause. A
stunning fuchsia, her flower is the
helping hands of a community and the
healing of a nation. By the kindness of
a Salvadoran woman haunted by gang
violence and lurking threats, I have
been given insight and have witnessed
true poverty and crisis.

It is our duty as children of God to
respond to our mission in life- whether
it’s being kind towards foreigners
from a country that has wronged you,
forgiving an enemy, or dedicating your
life to God’s plan despite lingering
questions and uncertainty. Maybe it
is our duty to plant the Borla seed
handed down to us by faithful listeners
and to have the courage to let it grow.
All it takes is faith.

Did You Know?
The three branches of Maryknoll –
■ Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers,
■ Maryknoll Sisters,
■ and us, Maryknoll Lay Missioners –
are each separately funded and operated.

Although we often join together to serve in
mission, each entity depends on its donors for support.

Maryknoll Lay Missioners serves the poor in Africa, Asia, and
Latin America.

To learn more about us, and how your support creates lasting
improvements worldwide, visit mkml.org.
Friends Across Borders is Maryknoll Lay Missioners’ mission awareness program. We invite you to deepen and enrich your understanding of mission by joining us on an exciting mission trip. You will have the opportunity to experience what you could never discover in travel brochures, films, or books. You will experience what life is really like in communities where MKLM missioners are living out their faith, and working for, and with, the local people.

We look forward to hearing from you and accompanying you on an experience that will change and enrich your life.

Upcoming Mission Awareness Trips

- **EL SALVADOR-JustFaith, June 20 - 29, 2014** Deadline for signups: Feb. 21, 2014
- **CHILE-Notre Dame and Marquette, July 7 - 21, 2014** Deadline for signups: April 7, 2014
- **BOLIVIA, August 9 – 21, 2014** Deadline for signups: Feb. 10, 2014
- **CAMBODIA-JustFaith, August 16 – 28, 2014** Deadline for signups: April 18, 2014
- **CAMBODIA, February 14 – 26, 2015** Deadline for signups: Aug. 15, 2014

Contact Us Today:
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www.friendsacrossborders.org

Kids Only

Maryknoll Lay Missioners help people in many countries. Find the 7 differences in these two scenes of a fruit market in El Salvador.

- Pupusas are a popular food in El Salvador. They are sometimes filled with meat, cheese and beans.
- Hawksbill turtles live off the coast and have nesting sites on the shores.
- Soccer is the most popular sport in El Salvador.
- Salvadorans celebrate their heritage during fiestas patrias.

Answers: (from left to right) 1. recycle logo on bucket; 2. lady’s shirt color; 3. watermelon on jug; 4. half watermelon on pile; 5. coffee cup; 6. toucan; 7. gecko on wall

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Our Missioners Build Bridges

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