



Maryknoll
Brothers'
Newsletter



September 29th, 2010

Saint Michael the Archangel

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*St. Michael the Archangel
Patron of the Maryknoll Brothers and the Society
of Maryknoll
September 29th, 2010*

Maryknoll Brothers History (From 1911 to the Present) The Beginnings Rome, Hawthorne and Ossining

Rome, Italy

In the spring of 1911 Father Thomas Frederick Price (Wilmington, North Carolina) and Father James Anthony Walsh (Boston, Massachusetts) having been given permission by the American Hierarchy to establish a seminary went to Rome to obtain the blessing of the Holy See. On the 29th of June they met with Pope Pius X. He granted their petition to establish a foreign mission seminary in the United States. This would become the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers. After this meeting Father Walsh went to the Austrian Alps (the Tyrol) for some much needed rest and to take the water cures. At the same time Father Price went to France, to fulfill his ever present dream to visit the shrine Lourdes, in order to visit the family of Saint Bernadette, with whom he had been in correspondence for many years and to make another visitation in order to pray at Saint Bernadette's tomb in Nerves.

While he was in the mountains, Father Walsh met a young man who was working near the hotel he was staying at. They began to talk and it came out that the young man was a former Mill Hill seminarian. He had left the seminary due to illness. He expressed to Father Walsh that he still had a desire to work for the missions. Father Walsh invited him to come to the United States and to Maryknoll. Before the young man's arrival Father Walsh wrote to the Superior of the Mill Hill Society informing him of his chance encounter with the young man.

Perhaps it was here that the idea of a Brotherhood was born to Father Walsh. In his writings for 1911, Father Walsh has nearly four pages in his handwriting on his concept of a Missionary Brotherhood of Saint Michael or the Auxiliary Brothers of Saint Michael that would be attached to the fledgling seminary. Many of which were later incorporated into the Auxiliary Brothers of Saint Michael (Maryknoll Brothers).

Hawthorne, New York

Once back in the United States Fathers Walsh and Price established Maryknoll in Westchester County just north of New York City, in the village of Hawthorne, NY. There with the help of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne and the Dominican community they spent their first year in rented buildings in the village of Hawthorne. After the first three priests, Father James Anthony Walsh (Boston Massachusetts), Father Thomas Frederick Price (Wilmington, North Carolina) and Father John I. Lane (Boston, Massachusetts), and the early Theresians, a group of lay women who eventually became the Maryknoll Sisters and before the first seminarians arrived at Maryknoll. A small group of men came to this community they were the first Maryknoll Brothers.

These were men who wished to be a part of this growing movement but who did not feel they were called to an ordained ministry. So from March until September the first group of Maryknollers were the three priests, three women called Theresians who eventually became the Maryknoll Sisters, and three older men who were the beginnings of what became the Maryknoll Brothers.

The first of these men was Ernst Hollger the former Mill Hill seminarian from Austria. Father Walsh invited him to come and join the fledgling community which he did in March of 1912. Shortly after that in early April a young man, Thomas McCann from Brooklyn wandered up the road to offer his services and was invited to join the group, he moved to Hawthorne in June. He was followed by a man from Boston, Frederick Maguire, a printer by trade.

The only one of these first three men to stay and make perpetual commitment to Maryknoll was Brother Thomas McCann the Brooklynite. He worked for most of his time at Maryknoll, NY. It is interesting to note that the first seminarian was also from the Diocese of Brooklyn, Francis Xavier Ford. Ernst Hollger eventually left to join a Diocese in Iowa and Frederick Maguire returned home but kept in touch with Maryknoll for many years.

There is a story of Brother Thomas from the early days of Maryknoll at Hawthorne. It appears that Brother Thomas had a great sweet tooth and one day after taking Father James Anthony Walsh to the train station, he stopped to pick up two Boston Cream pies, before returning to the houses that were the first community's dwellings. He came to the home used by the secretaries with the two pies. The women were happy to share in the bounty. They were left holding the pies while Brother Thomas went for a knife.

There was a knock at the door, and much to their surprise, when it was opened Father Walsh and another priest was at the door. It seems while Father Walsh was waiting for his train to New York, one pulled in from New York, with a visitor to Maryknoll and Father Walsh escorted him back to the rented homes that were the first residences of Maryknoll. The ladies were standing there with the pies and Brother Thomas beat a hasty retreat through a window.

The early work was one of doing any job that came long. There was a tent below the men's house where the Brothers kept a fire going to heat bath water and dish washing water. Brother Thomas was not knowledgeable about using wood for this purpose and he often filled the tent with smoke as he put green wood on the fire.

[Ossining, New York](#)

In the fall of 1912, the three Brothers helped in the move from Hawthorne to the site in Ossining, which soon became known as Maryknoll, NY. After the move during the first weeks in September the small community had mass together after their first night at the new home. Priests, Brothers and the first six seminarians were all housed in the old farmhouse. Brother Thomas was back and forth between the two sites for nearly a month, picking up furniture and goods and visiting the Secretaries. He is remembered as having a wonderful tenor voice and many days he was the core of the entertainment for the small group, both at Hawthorne and also at Maryknoll. In December of 1915 there is mention of Brother Thomas and Frederick being part of an impromptu band that serenades the secretaries for St. Stephen's day.

He was also a companion to Father Price on many of the earliest promotion dates that Father Price undertook for the community. In the symposium on Father Price there are a few stories about this relationship. One even has reference to Brother Thomas' fondness for sweets and Father Price's parsimonious nature.

The relationship with the early groups at Maryknoll, priests, seminarians, Sisters and Brothers was always something everyone commented on. It was a true family spirit that pervaded everything that was done. It can also be seen in the letters that passed between the Brothers from those early days and Mother Mary Joseph; while formal they always had a friendly tone to them.

Brother Thomas accompanied Father Price in the early days of Maryknoll when Father Price was going around giving talks on mission, fundraising and vocations. Brother Thomas, in most cases was not allowed to stay in the rectories. He found a room at a boarding house.

Every morning when they started the next trip to another parish, Brother Thomas always presented

Father Price with enough money for the room and also a little extra to add to the growing funds for Maryknoll. Father Price, ever the practical man, asked how this money was raised and Brother Thomas innocently replied

That he would look in the local newspaper for death notices or particular occasions that were occurring in the town, and he would then attend the gathering or wake and with his beautiful tenor voice sing a song or two.

This would then give rise to a spontaneous collection by the attendees or mourners which Brother Thomas would then present to Father Price the following morning. Father Price soon put a stop to that source of income as not being the best thing for a Brother to do.

On another day as they were eating at a train station, Brother Thomas asked if he could have a piece of pie and coffee to end the meal. Father Price asked how much for coffee and pie from the waiter. Upon hearing the reply Father Price said that back where he was from you could get a pot of coffee and a whole pie for that amount of money. The reply from the waiter was well you aren't there anymore. It appears that Brother Thomas got his pie, and Father Price a lesson that things were not always equal.

The early years were all centered at Maryknoll, New York. The Mill Hill Society was very helpful in the early days by lending some of their priests to help in formation of the fledgling community. A Father McCabe was made the first director of the Brothers. The Dominican Community lent the aid of two priests Father Callan and Father McHugh both of whom remained with Maryknoll until their deaths, as well as the Archdiocese of New York who supplied Father Phelan a former priest who was now pastor in Brewster, New York.

It was here that the growing community worked to establish strong roots. The Brothers worked on the farm, which was a very important, because of the food it supplied to the three groups. They also worked at The Field Afar, and performed general maintenance on the many buildings. The small group of Brothers was able to meet the charges they were given.

Brother Xavier Lambe (Fairfax, Vermont) was the head of this farm work. As a young man in Vermont he had heard one of the first talks given on Maryknoll by Father Price. He had

experience as the owner and chief worker on the family dairy farm before he entered in 1916. This type of experience really did help to get Maryknoll's farms established at the Center – Maryknoll, New York and at the Venard School for Boys in Clarks Summit PA. These farms produced much of what the growing communities consumed. He was joined by Brother Aloysius Moliner (Havana, Cuba) who entered in 1916, together both these man started the long tradition of the Maryknoll Brothers working on the seminary farm, with the help of the Maryknoll seminarians. This always allowed for a great work force.

Brother Henry Corcoran (New York, NY) who arrived at Maryknoll in 1916 proposed that everyone in the small community gather two rocks a day from the walls between the fields to prepare for construction of the seminary buildings. This served the dual purpose of gathering building material and also clearing the land. This was in addition to the daily manual labor that the group was involved with every day. He also suggested that any visitor who came to visit, either buy bricks for the work or to bring stones and if unable to leave a donation to purchase the material.

Brother Henry also worked hard in the fledgling development department to establish the sponsor system. This was something that Brother Luke de la Motte (Stamford, California) a convert from Episcopalian Church introduced to raise funds for the missionaries overseas. This was the program that Father Charles McCarthy is credited as founding this system but it was begun by the work of these two Brothers.

Brother Luke also had a Master's degree and soon joined the faculty at the Venard along with Brother Daniel Doherty (Boston, Massachusetts).

Most of the early Brothers arrived with some trade and so in addition to the farm work, repairs and upkeep they worked in those particular fields as well. Brother Frederick Maguire (Boston, Massachusetts) plied his trade as printer and helped put together and print the early Field Afar magazines. Brother Mark Dance (London, England) was a chef in hotels and on ocean liners before his entrance, made use of that skill at Maryknoll, and the hose of training in Washington DC and later Los Altos in California.

Brother Mark Dance was a convert to Catholicism but he had another interesting fact to his life. Brother Mark was married and he had a daughter. Both he and his wife converted to Catholicism and wished to dedicate their lives to service.

The condition for acceptance was that he and his wife had to separate. She went to live at the Maryknoll Sisters. Brother Mark was assigned to other Maryknoll houses in the United States, the Washington DC house of studies (Diary of the Washington House Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers Archives) and the seminary residence at Los Altos, California.

Brothers George Lannen (Hartford Connecticut), Gerard Languard (New York City, NY), Brother Martin Barry (New York City, NY), Brother Benedict Barry (Newark, NJ) Brother Joseph Donahue (Newark, NJ) and Brother Bernard Bobb (Grenada, British West Indies) were the other men who joined in the early days. Brother Gerard was a graduate of New York University and a veteran from the First World War. He was for many years he was the secretary for Father, later

Bishop James Anthony Walsh. Brother George spent many years doing secretarial work and finished out his working life in the Promotion Department. Brother Martin Barry was a carpenter but with his assignment to the West Coast Missions he soon was involved as a bus driver and an athletic director at the Seattle parish with the Japanese. Brother Benedict Barry also worked as the secretary of the rector and general factotum around the growing seminary. Brother Bernard Bobb was assigned to the heating plant.

There is a wonderful picture of a group of ten Brothers standing at the door of Saint Joseph's building taken around 1919. (This is from the fact that Bernard Bobb is in a dark suit in the photograph. This was the standard uniform or habit for postulant Brothers.) Brother Bernard Bobb was killed in a tragic accident in the Boiler Room in February of 1921.



Our First Group of Maryknoll Brothers – 1919

Photo taken in front of St. Joseph's building

Front Row: - Left to Right Brothers Albert Staubli (Albert), Martin F. Barry (Ma), Henry Corcoran (Henry), Thomas McCann (Thomas) and Charles Brinker (Leo)

Back Row: - Left to Right – Brothers Horace Moliner (Aloysius), George Lannen (George), Peter Lambe (Xavier), Joseph Donahue (Joseph), Eastman Bobb (Bernard).. who is in a suit.

Special Thanks to Jennifer Halloran- photo Archivist

New Language of Prayer

We are going to have to create a new language of prayer. And this new language has to come out of something which transcends all our traditions, and comes out of the immediacy of love. We have to part now, aware of the love that unites us, the love that unites us in spite of real differences. . . .

Oh God, we are one with you. You have made us one with you. You have taught us that if we are open to one another, you dwell in us. Help us to preserve this openness and to fight for it with all our hearts. Help us to realize that there can be no understanding where there is mutual rejection. Oh God, in accepting one another wholeheartedly, fully, completely, we accept You, and we thank You and we adore You, and we love You with our whole being, because our being is in Your being, our spirit is rooted in Your spirit. Fill us then with love, and let us be bound together with love as we go our diverse ways, united in this one spirit which makes you present in the world, and which make you witness to the ultimate reality that is love. Love has overcome. Love is victorious. Amen.

Thomas Merton, ocsso

Pope John Paul II, shortly before his death, spoke of his belief that the Church is in a new springtime of mission. It is in this spirit that the Marist Brothers have moved forward in mission with their Ad Gentes project. Other groups of missionaries are responding in various ways.

Certainly one of the new and more important ways of being in mission today is interreligious dialogue. The Spirit of God is blowing afresh in Asia and we, as missionaries, are privileged to stand at the crossroads of religions with a listening heart.

Asia is the womb of all the world's great scriptural traditions. Jesus Christ was born on Asian soil, as was the Buddha and the Prophet Mohammed. God's gift to Asia was a plurality of religions. But Jesus has been clothed in doctrines and dogmas that make him unrecognizable to his Asian brothers and sisters. The Christ we bring to Asia must come from within, not from without.

Asia does not need another religion. It does need the spirituality of Jesus. In fact, it hungers for that spirituality--for his love of the poor, for his single-hearted dedication to promoting the reign of God on earth. By bring Jesus from within, it is his spirituality we bring to Asia.

Interfaith dialogue, therefore, first and foremost, is something that takes place in silence deep within us. As the Christ within is revealed to us, we will also discover the Buddha and the Prophet Mohammed and all the other great religious sages of Asia—for Truth is One.

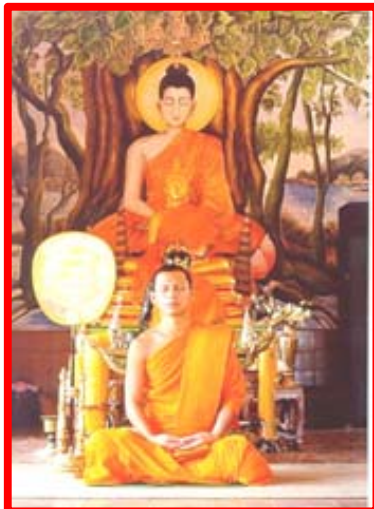
Interreligious dialogue is not a matter of relativism, as some have suggested. That is the language of fear. All religions are not the same, and no one engaged in interreligious dialogue at a serious level would make such a claim; rather, all faith traditions are unique, all reveal different aspects of the one truth. Unity in plurality. The scriptures of the great World Religions are the common heritage of humanity.

Nor is it a matter of syncretism, of our becoming partly Christian, partly Buddhist and partly Muslim. The deeper we are drawn within by the Spirit, the more we become rooted in Christ. A tree cannot be rooted in two places. But the more deeply a tree is rooted, the more surely its branches spread out, and that too is true of interfaith dialogue.

Few have been a better witness to this truth than Father Thomas Merton, one of the great religious figures of our own times. Merton met with the Dalai Lama only twice, very briefly, but the impact of that meeting is still being felt years later. Recently the Dalai Lama said, *"When I was a boy in Tibet, I felt that my own Buddhist religion must be the best—and that other faiths were somehow inferior. Now I see how naïve I was and how dangerous the extremes of religious intolerance can be today. . .*

"An early eye-opener for me was my meeting with the Trappist monk Thomas Merton in India shortly before his untimely death in 1968. Merton told me he could be perfectly faithful to Christianity, yet learn in depth from other religions like Buddhism. The same is true for me as an ardent Buddhist learning from the world's other great religions."

"A main point of my discussion with Merton was how central compassion was to the message of both Christianity and Buddhism. In my reading of the New Testament, I find myself inspired by Jesus' acts of compassion. His miracle of the loaves and fishes, his healing and his teaching are all motivated by the desire to relieve suffering." A simple meeting for a few hours between two men of different faiths, both profoundly spiritual—and the grace of that moment lives on today.



Under the inspiration of the Spirit we have come to realize that women and men of all faiths are co-pilgrims in their journey home to the divine. Evangelization is a mutual process taking place in that pilgrimage, as attested to so well by the words of one of Thailand's bishops on the Assembly floor of the Asian Bishops' Synod in Rome in 1998.

"Working with my Buddhist friends in the fields of human development, justice and peace," he said, "I feel inspired by their simplicity of life, their openness, their humane relationships, their unassuming ways of dealing with others. This is the Good News that the Buddhists give to us."

"My Buddhist friends are at the same time, scandalized by our triumphalistic attitude, our absolutism and arrogance. They resent our rigid treatment of human problems. In their eyes, our Church in Thailand still presents itself as foreign and Western. In the context of the above, we should ask ourselves, how can we incarnate the Church in Asia."

How clearly Bishop Manat was pointing out how we are evangelized by Buddhists, how their living out the teachings of the Buddha summons us Christians to conversion, to a change of heart.

No less do we, by our efforts to practice of the values of the Kingdom of God, to live out the teachings of the gospel in our own lives, call Buddhist to a change of heart, to conversion, to a

living out more deeply their commitment to the teachings of the Buddha. It is in this sense that we find ourselves being mutually evangelized in our common pilgrimage home to the Divine.

For As Pope John Paul II pointed out in some of his statements, "*Interreligious dialogue at its deepest level is always a dialogue of salvation, because it seeks to discover, clarify and understand better the signs of the age-long dialogue which God maintains with mankind.*" (To the Pontifical Council for Dialogue, Rome 13.11.1992) "*This dialogue continues to the present day, and will go on until the end of time.*" (To Islamic leaders, Senegal, 22.02.1992) "*By dialogue, we let God be present in our midst, for as we open ourselves in dialogue to one another, we also open ourselves to God. The fruit of dialogue is union between people and union of people with God, who is the source and revealer of all truth, and whose Spirit guides men in freedom only when they meet one another in honesty and love.*" (To representatives of religions, Madras, 05.02.1986)

"There is only one divine plan for every human being who comes into this world, one single origin and goal, whatever may be the color of his skin, the historical and geographical framework within which he happens to live and act, or the culture in which he grows up and expresses himself. The differences are a less important element when confronted with the unity which is radical, fundamental and decisive." (Assisi, 22.12.1986)

"The entire human race, in the infinite complexity of its history, with its different cultures, is 'called to form the new People of God'. (To the Roman Curia, 22.12.1986). "If all men and women, whatever the differences between them, cling to the truth with respect for the unique dignity of every human being, a new world order, a civilization of love can be achieved." (To Indians in Rome, 12.06.1986)

Therefore, "*Interreligious dialogue has taken on a new and immediate urgency in the present historical circumstances....genuine dialogue leads to inner purification and conversion and only such a spiritual renewal will save the world from further widespread sufferings.*" (To the Pontifical Council for Dialogue, 13.11.1992)

"In a world that is increasingly interdependent there is a great need for dialogue and co-operation among believers in order to build the future of the human family on solid ground or respect for each person's inalienable dignity, equality, justice for all, tolerance and solidarity in human relations. I am fully convinced that the time is ripe in human history for followers of the various religions to seek a new respect for one another." (Colombo, 21.01.1995)

"Religions are many and varied, and they reflect the desire of men and women down through the ages to enter into a relationship with the Absolute Being." (To representatives of religions, Assisi, 27.10.1986) "*The origin of the one human family is found in God. We can call God by many names, without ever exhausting his reality, which is beyond us.*" (To representatives of religions, Senegal, 20.02.1992)

"On this earth we are pilgrims to the absolute and Eternal, who alone can save and satisfy the heart of the human person." (To Buddhists and Shintoists, Rome 20.02.1980) "*We are all pilgrims on the path of seeking to do God's will in everything...Let goodwill and peace govern our relations! Let us always be willing to speak to each other and listen to each other..."* (To the people of

Gambia, 23.02.1992) *“God would like the developing history of humanity to be a fraternal journey in which we accompany one another towards the transcendent goal which he sets for us. . . . Either we walk together in peace and harmony, or we drift apart and ruin ourselves and others.”* (Assisi, 27.10.1986) *“May God guide us and bless us as we strive to walk together, hand in hand, and build together a world of peace!”* (Delhi, 01.02.1986) *“We are all pilgrims to the dawn of the new millennium: may it be a dawn marked by God’s peace.”* (Message to the Prayer Meeting at Assisi, 07.09.1994.)

It is partly in light of these papal statements that a new way of being in mission has been fostered—the path of interreligious dialogue. Several individuals have attempted to formulate principles or guidelines for this dialogue. One such person was a mentor of mine, the director of an Ashram in India.

His conclusions may strike some as controversial, and difficult or even impossible to accept. But they are the views of a man of exceptional insight, a wisdom that comes with years of meditation, dialogue and reflection along with a profound understanding of the various faith traditions. They are therefore well-worth reflecting on. It is through open discussion that the Church, guided by the Spirit, comes to fuller understanding.

“If we look at religions as the whole panorama of God’s dialogue with humanity we see:

1. Each religion is relative—there is no absolute. Each religion is based on a relative core experience.
2. Each religion is relational. It is related to other religions. There is no self-sufficient religion.
3. Each religion can only be understood as a part of the universal process of dialogue.
4. Hence, every religion is a fragmentary revelation of God. There is no fullness of revelation.
5. Every religion is a unique manifestation of the Divine Mystery—it is never exhaustive. No revelation exhausts the Divine Mystery.
6. Every religion is a moment in the whole process of the God – humanity dialogue.
7. There is no final revelation.
8. The language of religion and faith is a love language, and should not be a dogmatic language.
9. Every religion is an invitation to listen to God in the other. Therefore every religion is part of the pluralistic plan of God.”

On the other hand, Father Thomas Keating has drawn up a set of guidelines for interfaith dialogue, which have been discussed and refined by a number of interreligious groups and enjoy a somewhat wide acceptance. Perhaps in the process of being refined, they have tended to become somewhat ‘wordy’ in the cause of wider acceptance.

Father Keating says: *“As we study and open ourselves to the wisdom of the world’s religions, we become more and more amazed to see a certain commonality and unity in the area of human values. I personally feel that this commonality has not been adequately grasped, and that if it could be, this would make an extraordinary difference in the world today. . . . The spiritual dimension, which is present in each of the world religions, is precisely what is needed so badly today. But historically the world religions have tended to oppose themselves to each other, with each being exclusivist and claiming to be the path to the Ultimate Mystery. Out of naive loyalty, people have fought for their respective religions to the point of blood. But through spiritual confrontation, we are discovering a deep commonality that is more profound than the divergences we also encounter in genuine dialogue. . . .*

“In the next generation the question may not be which religion one belongs to, but whether religion itself is of value. Those who have had some experience of transcendence must find some way to communicate the fact that the experience of the Ultimate Mystery is open to every human person who chooses to pursue the search for truth and embark on the spiritual journey—a journey which is literally without end.”

Guidelines for Interreligious Understanding

- 1) The world religions bear witness to the experience of the Ultimate Reality to which they give various names: Brahman, the Absolute, God, Allah, Great Spirit, and the Transcendent.
- 2) The Ultimate Reality surpasses any name or concept that can be given to it.
- 3) The Ultimate Reality is the source (ground of being) of all existence.
- 4) Faith is opening, surrendering, and responding to the Ultimate Reality. This relationship precedes every belief system.
- 5) The potential for human wholeness—or in other frames of reference, liberation, self-transcendence, enlightenment, salvation, transforming union, mocha, nirvana, fana—is present in every human person.
- 6) The Ultimate Reality may be experienced not only through religious practices but also through nature, art, human relationships, and service to others.
- 7) The differences among belief systems should be present as facts that distinguish them, not as points of superiority.
- 8) In the light of the globalization of life and cultures now in process, the personal and social ethical principles proposed by the world religions in the past need to be re-thought and re-expressed. For example:

- a) In view of the increasing danger of global destruction, the world religions should emphasize the corresponding moral obligation of nations and ethnic groups to make use of nonviolent methods for the resolution of conflicts.
- b) The world religions should encourage civil governments to respect every religion without patronizing one in particular.
- c) The world religions should work for the practical acceptance of the dignity of the human person; a more equitable distribution of material goods and of opportunities for human development; the cause of human rights, especially the right to choose and practice one's own religion or no religion; the solidarity and harmony of the human family; the stewardship of the earth and its resources; the renewal of their respective spiritual traditions; and interreligious understanding through dialogue.

Thomas Keating, ocso

Strides forward, then, are being made in this new way of being in mission—interfaith dialogue. And we must not be disheartened. When we look at religions we see diverging lines; but when we look at spirituality, we find converging lines. Interfaith dialogue ultimately is not about words. It is about communion. It takes place in utter stillness within the depth of our being, where all differences are resolved, for they simply cease to exist.

Surely we sojourners in our common pilgrimage home to the Divine -- stumble as we may -- can take courage in the words of Thomas Merton spoken shortly before his death. Speaking to his non-Christian brothers and sisters at his conference in Calcutta he said: *"The deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion. It is wordless. It is beyond all words, and it is beyond all speech, and it is beyond all concepts. Not that we discover a new unity. We discover an older unity. My dear brothers, [and sisters], we are already one. But we imagine we are not. What we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are."*

Br. John Beeching, MM
Bangkok, August 18, 2010

MICHAELMAS

In former days the Maryknoll Brothers were officially known as The Auxiliary Brothers of St. Michael, and it is therefore easy to surmise that St. Michael the Archangel, whose feast day is celebrated on September 29th, is their official patron.

In the British Isle, the feast is known as Michaelmas, and in some parts, simply as 'Goose Day'. Certainly the Brothers were never encouraged call it so.

As the feast falls near the equinox, it is associated with the beginning of autumn and the shortening of days and darker nights, and the celebration was associated with invoking protection against darkness.

It used to be said that the harvest had to be completed by Michaelmas, thus marking the end of one season and the beginning of another. When Henry the VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church he attempted to do away with the feast of St. Michael, encouraging in its place the celebration of a harvest festival. None the less, the feast yet survives as Michaelmas in a good number of places.

New servants were hired on St. Michael's day, land was exchanged and debts were paid, as it marked a change of season, it also came to be a time to elect magistrates and so the beginning of legal and university term.

How it came to be known as 'Goose Day' and its association with goose fairs held throughout many parts of England derives from a tradition the Queen Elizabeth I was dining on goose when she got word of the defeat of the Armada. Henceforth she determined to eat goose on St. Michael's feast day and many of her subjects followed suit.

There were other traditions associated with Michaelmas in the British Isles, such as making a St. Michael's Bannock, or Struan Miceil (a large scone-like cake). In Scotland, Michaelmas was also the day when local communities held horse races.

St. Michael is also honored in Islamic tradition, where he is called Meha'el. Although he is mentioned only once in the Qur'an, he quite often referred to in the hadith or sayings of the Prophet Mohammed. According to one of the hadith, the Angel Gabriel (Jibril) told the prophet that Michael was in charge of the plants and rain. Maybe that's why some of the Maryknoll Brothers have proven to be such fine gardeners. I don't suppose any of us will be dining of goose on September 29th.

Maryknoll News from around the World... *Greetings from Hyde Park - Chicago!*

I'm pleased to announce that we have five new candidates this year. They arrived to Chicago on August 8th, where they received some initial orientation and a general introduction to the area. On August 13, we went on retreat to Ender's Island, near Mystic, Conn. Fr. Peter LeJac lead the 4 day retreat and it was very good. He related scripture passages to the themes of Vocation, devotion to the Blessed Mother and the Eucharist. The setting at Ender's Island is beautiful and the food is very good. Everyone liked it a lot.

On Aug 19 we returned to Maryknoll, NY where the new candidates were welcomed at a social in the Founders' Room. Aug 20th, we attended the welcoming Mass, which was well attended and very inspirational. Aug. 20th, Fr. John Eybel and 6 of the candidates returned to Chicago, I returned with the rest on Aug. 28th. It is a 14 hour drive.

Fr. John had to get back to get things ready for the CTU Maryknoll Mass on Aug.29th. It gave us an opportunity to fly the Maryknoll banner and talk to the assembled crowd of 200 about our Maryknoll chrisms. Maryknoll Priests, Brothers, Sisters, Lay Missioners and Affiliates were all represented. The Mass had elements of cultural aspects from all three continents where we work.

Let me take the opportunity to introduce the five guys to everyone.

Glen D'Angelo is from Savanna, Georgia, where he worked in construction. He spent 6 months with Fr. Frank Higdon at his mission at the southern part of Cochabamba. Glen is studying at Harold Washington College in Chicago.

Jonathan Hill is from the pan-handle of Florida where he was working at his father' feed mill. Prior to that Jonathan worked in Wyoming as a counselor at a ranch for troubled youth. He is studying at St. Joseph's Seminary within Loyola U. in Chicago.

Peter Latouf is from Detroit. He worked at Disneyworld before entering Maryknoll, prior to that, he was in charge of arts and crafts exhibits and competitions for the Michigan State Fair. He is studying Philosophy and Theology at CTU.

Tony Lopez is from El Paso, where he ran the family delicatessen. Before that he was trained as a chef and worked in La Vegas. He commuted everyday to downtown Chicago to attend Harold Washington College.

Chace Olinger is from Huntington, IN. He is a computer expert who spent time in Korea visiting his sister and her husband in the military and then 3 months in Japan exploring the Maryknoll missions there. He has a life-long fascination for all things Japanese.

You will notice that our formation program includes undergraduate studies. This is new for us in a way, as is our affiliation with St. Joseph's Seminary and Harold Washington College. We strive to form community and stay united with varying schedules and ministries. Thankfully the new men are flexible and understanding, not to mention hardworking.



As an update, let me tell you that Dae Kim is doing a bang-up job in Cochabamba in his OTP and will return to the US in 2011. Lam Hua has just started his two year OTP in Language School in Tanzania. Shaun Crumb will be looking for OTP possibilities for July 2011. Philip Yang, Daniel Kim and Rodrigo Ulloa are studying at CTU. Angel Garcia is studying at St. Joseph's seminary. Keep in mind that Rodrigo will be ordained a Deacon on September 25th at St. Clare of Montefalco, here in Chicago . We're all very happy about this.

Please pray for us, that we may grow in God's grace and live up to our call!

Bro. Joseph Bruener

From Maryknoll, New York... ..

John Blazo was at a youth gathering in the Hartford, Conn. Diocese. There were more than 200 children there with their teachers. And I gave out our Maryknoll materials to them, especially to the teachers who came by.

Archbishop Dolan was here for the 3rd time in over the past months. He gave out awards to the head Catechists of the archdiocese of New York. . They moved this program to Maryknoll from the Dunwoodie seminary a few years ago. So it is great for Maryknoll exposure in general and especially for our Centenary.

Conrad is now living at St. Teresa's residence. His health is fine and all are hoping he makes 100 years of life.

Bob Butsch just got in from China in his usual Fall visit and is now upstate New York visiting family and friends.

Tom Hickey just got back from a great vacation in Scotland visiting friends.

Here at the center they are putting in 'Swipe cards" capability similar to the Price building. When the job is done, the "X Key" will be history.

From Cochabamba, Bolivia ...

There 23 students at the Maryknoll Mission Center here in Cochabamba with Ray Finch being Director of the Center. Sister Cathy DeVito is involved in cultural orientation and is presently in the United States for vacation.

Farewells were given to Bro. *Albert Patrick* by the Society and our Maryknoll Lay missionaries. He was also given farewells by our Maryknoll Sisters, *Rose Christopher McKeegan* and *Rosemary Kane* at the casa Sta. Ana and at the Casa Rosario. He is now in retirement at Maryknoll, New York.

The Maryknoll Mission Center has put out a publication *Maryknoll Bolletin*"and it has an article on Bro. *Larry Kenning* on Non Violence.

Frank Dolphin is teaching English to Father Irineo at the Franciscan church of the Hospicio in Cochabamba.



An e-mail from Brother *Alex Walsh* informs us here at Maryknoll in Cochabamba that he will be with us again around November 20th. He has been in the States for health reasons and so we are looking forward to seeing Alex again.

The Bolivian region welcomes our Lay Missioners the "*Weavers*" who arrived the other day at the airport and were met by Fr. *Paul Sykora* and also by the lay missioners here in Cochabamba. They were at the Maryknoll Mission Center with their three children and had lunch with the Society members.

Chillan, Chile ...



Brother John Nitsch was present for the installation of Fr. Fred Hegarty at the Maryknoll School San Vicente to become citizen of Chile. Fr. Fred Hegarty is third Maryknoll priest to receive this great honor from the Country. The other two Maryknollers who are now deceased are Fathers Richard Sammon and Joseph Cappel. Congratulations to Fred Hegarty.



The Maryknoll Lay missioners were also present and they were Ted Gutmann, Maurja Gonzalez and Carolyn and Ronald Bosse.

Despite steep decline, brothers see hope for their vocation's future

Sep. 20, 2010
Article Details

In 1978, I attended a meeting of the National Association of Religious Brothers in Dayton, Ohio, and wrote an article for NCR on the state of the brotherhood. Although the population of brothers by then had dropped by 33 percent since 1965, there was a sense of optimism at the meeting -- a feeling that the overall decline of religious vocations had just about bottomed out.

By Robert McClory

Holy Cross Br. Paul Bednarczyk: "We are not part of the hierarchical structure. A brother by definition is on an even level, on the same plane with everyone he encounters."

There are three things you need to know about today's religious brothers.

First, their numbers are continuing to decline at an alarming rate. In 1978, I attended a meeting of the National Association of Religious Brothers in Dayton, Ohio, and wrote an article for *NCR* on the state of the brotherhood. Although the population of brothers by then had dropped by 33 percent since 1965, there was a sense of optimism at the meeting -- a feeling that the overall decline of

religious vocations had just about bottomed out and the downward trend was about to be reversed. Said one enthusiastic attendee, "I believe we are entering the age of brotherhood."

The euphoria was due in part to the prevailing spirit of Vatican II. In this new era of the layperson, the brothers were laymen. At a time when clericalism was under siege, the brothers were involved exclusively in nonclerical ministries. And as many vowed religious sisters and priests were trying to balance the signs of the times against the outmoded regulations of their orders, the brothers were relatively unconstrained by canonical rules.

But now, 32 years later, the age of the brotherhood has still not come to pass. The precipitous decline of the 1970s rolls on unabated. The 4,700 religious brothers in the United States in 2010, as reported by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), represent a 62 percent drop from the 1965 figures. The brother decline is far steeper than that of priests in this country and is almost as steep as that of religious women.

It's clear the brotherhood has not been able to totally reject the popular belief that brothers are really would-be priests who just couldn't meet the requirements of priesthood. The tired, old question, "Why didn't you go all the way?" still lingers, veteran brothers sadly acknowledge. Nor have the brothers been able to toss aside the even older image of the brother as a simple soul who answers the phone, sweeps the hall, mows the lawn and takes on all the menial tasks no one else wants.

Meanwhile, Cardinal Franc Rodé, prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and the man behind the Vatican's controversial investigation of women religious, is preparing a document on religious brothers. He indicated concern about the decline in vocations and the "lack of attention on the part of the church to brothers." Their vocation, he said, "has its own reasons and a particular mission in the church." Brothers contacted for this story declined to speculate on where Rodé's concerns might lead.

The brothers are extremely proud of who they are and what they do, and they resent suggestions that the brotherhood is a second-class vocation.

That image is "just ignorance," said Br. Thomas Osorio, president of the Religious Brothers Conference (the new name of the former National Association of Religious Brothers). "Many of our members are better educated than most priests. We are teachers and doctors and university professors and scientists." As examples, he cited a brother-psychiatrist who heads a hospital in South Korea, and he spoke of the skilled brother medics who run a hospice in China. "The vocation of the brother is very different," said Osorio. "It's not like that of the priest who is called to administer sacraments. Ours is a vocation of the heart. We [brothers] are called to be in a relationship, to be one with the people we serve and with all who are suffering."

Paul Bednarczyk is a Holy Cross brother who sensed the unique nature of the vocation early in life. He attended a high school in Connecticut run by the Holy Cross congregation and was struck by the dedication and competence of the teaching brothers. "They were among the most significant men in my life," he said. But when he approached his parents about sensing his own religious vocation, they sent him to see the pastor of the local church, who quickly directed him to the local

seminary. He was a senior at the time, and he tried to go along with the advice of his elders. "But I just wasn't excited about going to a seminary," said Bednarczyk. "I remember getting up one night, going downstairs and thinking for a long time. I decided that this was a mistake." Yes, it seemed clear to him he had a vocation to the religious life, but it was as a teacher, as a brother, not as a priest. So after graduation, he began studies at Stonehill College in Massachusetts, run by the Holy Cross congregation, and formally entered the order as a novice in 1979.

Instead of feeling inferior to priests, Bednarczyk said he felt comfortable as a brother from the beginning and has never lost that sense. In fact, he said, his status as a brother provides him a kind of freedom the priesthood cannot give. "We are not part of the hierarchical structure, strictly speaking," he said. "We are not above anybody. A brother by definition is on an even level, on the same plane with everyone he encounters." That doesn't mean brothers cannot hold positions of authority, he explained, but it's authority in a different way, "a brotherly way." During his career, Bednarczyk, now 53, has had ample opportunity to exercise his brotherly authority, as vocation director for his province, as director of campus ministry at a Holy Cross high school, as director of student life at an international high school in Rome, and in his present post as executive director of the National Religious Vocation Conference, which includes among its active members priests, bishops, sisters and brothers.

That a lay brother oversees such a body may seem an anomaly, since the Vatican long ago ruled that only a cleric, a priest, may hold a top position in any church organization that includes clerics among its members. As a result, congregations like the Franciscans and Dominicans, which have both priest and brother members, are prohibited from electing a brother as provincial or regional superior. However, two such congregations, the Marianist and Holy Cross orders, were exempted from the prohibition by Rome in the 19th century. Thus, Benarczyk finds himself in an exceptional situation. He said he's had no problems during his five years heading the conference but admitted he is careful to do background research on priest-related issues when they arise.

Brothers' general exclusion from superior roles in congregations that include priests is irksome to many brothers. The issue came to a head in 2009 when the Maryknoll missionary order elected a brother as superior for the U.S. region. The Vatican immediately vetoed the election, citing the old prohibition and claiming governance by a layperson would diminish the distinctive character of the priesthood. The Maryknoll superior general commented afterward that the order had hoped Vatican officials by then had "moved beyond" such distinctions, though obviously they had not.

A man who has not been inhibited in any way by his vocation is James Zullo, a 52-year member of the De LaSalle Christian Brothers. With a doctorate in psychology, he taught for many years at Loyola University in Chicago and is a recognized expert on the psychology of life transitions, both individual and institutional. Zullo has addressed groups of priests, sisters and brothers all over the world on issues of coping with change and believes his role as a brother enables him to be frank in ways that most priests cannot be. "We are free," he said, echoing Bednarczyk. "We don't have to support the clerical culture. Many priests are trapped by diocesan policies and are unable to move freely." Asked if he had ever been banned from addressing a Catholic group, Zullo said, "I'm not on any bishop's blacklist, and I think it's because, as a brother, I operate beneath their radar screens."

Zullo said the future of the brotherhood may look bleak in the United States, but the numbers are doing much better elsewhere, especially in Africa and Asia. CARA figures support his contention. Worldwide, the number of brothers declined by only 32 percent between 1970 and 2008, with the ongoing 62 percent loss in the United States accounting for much of the decrease. He spoke of the work of the Alexian, Marist, Patrician, Irish Christian and other brother congregations in the Third World. "There's exciting growth happening," he said. "We weren't seeing that 10 or 15 years ago." One major obstacle in these mission fields, said Zullo, is cultural misunderstanding of church's regulations on celibacy and other matters. "Sometimes a brother who is doing well will return to his village when there's a crisis of some kind, and he never comes back."

Third, some brothers look to a new day dawning.

Free (mostly) of internal church politics, brothers are pondering the status of Catholicism and visioning what they might contribute to the church of the future. Prominent among these visionaries is Br. Sean Sammon, who recently finished a four-year term as superior general of the worldwide Marist congregation. Now on a sabbatical, he is hoping to establish a center for the renewal of religious life during the next few years. He is not thinking of another typical retreat facility but a kind of think tank and laboratory for developing religious renewal in ways never before conceived.

"The old models of religious life have fallen apart," said Sammon, 62. "People don't understand its nature. It most certainly has not been effectively communicated to young people. We have got to redefine what religious life is." The Second Vatican Council told the church to observe the signs of the times, he noted, "but the signs of the times present during the period of the council were gone 10 years after the council. The world had changed completely."

In talks, articles and in his 2002 book, *Religious Life in America: A New Day Dawning*, Sammon speaks of "the latchkey kids" who have grown up in this era. They define family without relying solely on blood ties because of their high experience of divorce, he said; they trust friendship over all other relationships; they are slow to make long-term commitments; and they long for institutions that live up to their claims. These people, he noted, are sometimes bitter and angry with the church, more often indifferent to it. But the post-Vatican II population is not lost, declared Sammon -- and this is his major point: "They hunger for spirituality." The mantra of younger Catholics, "I'm not religious, I'm spiritual," is a foundation for genuine development, believes Sammon, adding that any renewal of religious life must tap into this hunger. As lay, vowed religious, he sees the brothers playing a key role in the development.

As Marist superior general, Sammon traveled the world and said he encountered significant developments in France, Australia and Latin America. He spoke of new "movements," whose lay members are not obsessed with the failings of the church but are "on fire for Jesus Christ" and live the Gospel in some form of community setting. He quickly pointed out that these movements are not to be confused with those familiar, reactionary, conservative thrusts that promote rigid obedience to authority and revel in the church of the past. Rather, said Sammon, these newer expressions of religious life function more "as a conscience for the church, modeling what it should be like, and are not always in sync with the hierarchy."



Bednarczyk also discussed the challenge of touching Catholics who grew up with Vatican II as remote to them as World War II. This generation knows Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, he said, and they're not as vehement about fighting church battles as are older generations. "But they are the signs of these times," he said, and must be taken seriously. He believes religious life as practiced by the brothers can provide a "prophetic dimension" to them and to the larger church, both through its emphasis on community life and in reaching out to the poor and suffering.

Perhaps then, "the age of the brotherhood" isn't as odd an idea as it seems.

Robert McClory is a longtime *NCR* contributor.

A few words from the Editor ...

The last issue being the June issue of the Brothers' Newsletter had an article about our Maryknoll Brother Thomas McCann who died in Los Angeles, California with his body being returned to the Maryknoll Society Center.

It is with this June issue and now in this issue and in the following issues that we begin to celebrate our 100th anniversary which is official in 2011 of the Society Priests and Brothers, the Brothers Newsletter will continue to write about the history of the Maryknoll Brothers.

I am in deep gratitude to Bro. Kevin Dargan and other Maryknollers who have helped Kevin to prepare this document on the History of the Maryknoll Brothers.

It is fitting with this issue that we remember the Maryknoll Brothers feast day on September 29th and it was a day that we went to "Bear Mountain park" for an all day outing of playing baseball, soccer and other sports as well as relaxing and just chatting. It was the day when our Maryknoll Sisters prepared the picnic lunch for us. The Maryknoll Sisters are very much a part of our history as well. And we thank you for this.



The day ended with a nice meal in the Seminary dining room that was given by our fellow Society priest brothers and kitchen staff. We give thanks to our priest brothers throughout the Maryknoll World for their brotherly support of our vocation as Brothers in the Society of Maryknoll.

Also our lay missionaries.

I must remind you that the deadline for the December issue for news will be December 8th, 2010.

Happy feast day of St. Michael to all our readers.

Thanks for your interest and cooperation for the continuation of this publication of the Maryknoll Brothers Newsletter.

Frank Dolphin – editor