

MARYKNOLL FATHERS & BROTHERS

AFRICA REGION



Evangelizing in Africa (and Everywhere) Through the Internet

By Joe Healey

A popular opening for an anecdote is: "I have some good news and some bad news. Which do you want to hear first?" Let's start with the bad news. At separate times during the past year two people from different offices at Maryknoll, New York visited the Africa Region on official business. As they began asking questions about different Maryknollers and their countries and ministries it became clear that they had not looked at the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers Africa Region Website.

Now for the good news: Had these two visitors looked at the website before coming to Africa many of their basic questions about "who is doing what and where?" would have been immediately answered. Our Webmaster, Dave Smith, has compiled an enormous amount of information about the Maryknoll Society in Africa. First there are extensive maps of the countries and cities where we live and work in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Tanzania. Each Maryknoll priest and Brother is found under the city where he lives with a photograph and three personal sections: biography, reflections, and ministries. Overall the website describes our present ministries as:

Communications (including Print, Radio, Video, Internet)
Development (including Buildings, Trees, Water)
Education (including Schools, Seminaries, Special Programs)
Health (including AIDS, Hospitals, Clinics)
Pastoral (including Evangelization, Sacraments, Youth) and
Specialized (including Street Children, Refugees)

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The "Photo Albums of Mission in Action" Page takes you on a virtual tour of our missionary work in pictures. The moral of the story: check out our website. It's a goldmine.

Now for some more good news. When I visited Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago in June 2002 I found that students (Maryknoll seminarians, Brother candidates and others) are using the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers Africa Region Website to do classroom presentations and write term papers on Africa-related topics. Of particular value are the Search Feature and links to other Africa-related websites (some of which are listed below). The Internet is a fantastic resource for information on Africa in general, the Catholic Church in Africa and the Maryknoll Society (as well as the Maryknoll Sisters Congregation and the Maryknoll Mission Association of the Faithful -- MMAF). Now if people would only use it!

It has been said that the computer/e-mail/Internet is the most important invention in the past 500 years (since 1450-1456 when the Latin Edition of the *Gutenberg Bible* was printed in Mainz, Germany - the first book to be printed with movable metal type). These different websites (listed below by title and Internet address) are a unique opportunity for Maryknollers in Africa to evangelize more effectively in our local situations and to share our creativity and experience with the rest of the Maryknoll world. The marvel of this new information technology is that through the Internet a person can reach out to health workers serving AIDS patients in Mombasa or street children in Nairobi or medical students in Mwanza and virtually go around the world at the same time. The *Maryknoll Africa Region Report to the Eleventh General Chapter December 2001* stated that among the chapter issues that surfaced at the Africa Region's five District meetings was: "Encourage better use of electronic communication throughout the Society and in our individual ministries."

Maryknoll Priests and Brothers in the Africa Region with Websites

Name of Website

Internet Address (URL)

Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers Africa Region

www.MaryknollAfrica.org

African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories

www.afriprov.org

Brother John Mullen's Website: Archdiocese of Mombasa CBHC and AIDS Relief Project

www.geocities.com/brojohn816

Bugando University College of Health Sciences

www.Bugando.org

Maryknoll Institute of African Studies (MIAS)

www.MIAS.edu

Ukweli Home of Hope
(Nairobi Street Children Project)

www.ukweli.net

Ukweli Video & Real Time

www.geocities.com/ukwelivideo



A valuable way of evangelizing through the Internet is an E-mail Discussion List (two-way participatory communications between the sender and receiver with exchange and feedback). The "discussion" takes place through the exchange of written text and graphics/photographs. This is called a ListServe or List, can be with or without File Attachments and normally is a free subscription. A message can be sent instantaneously everywhere in the world and can in turn be multiplied and further disseminated through other discussion lists. Two examples based in East Africa:

1. "CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) and Pastoral Care in Africa" (from Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza, Tanzania). About 180 subscribers. E-mail: cpeafrica@topica.com The automatic signature is:

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The Information Revolution

By David A. Smith

“The Internet changes *Everything*.” This saying is regarded as an absolute truism among the professionals who are at the forefront of the technological changes taking place in our world. And despite my vantage point being from the extreme sidelines of one of the least developed countries in the world, I am agreeing with them more and more these days.

Let me mention a few examples. While working in Tanzania and using a simple laptop computer, I have created three missionary websites — MaryknollAfrica.org, MIAS.edu, and Bugando.org — that have been viewed by thousands of people around the world. Literally all of the Maryknoll priests, brothers, sisters and associates working in Africa have made use of the Internet for email communications and access to Internet-based information. Some are even using instant messaging (chat) and voice over the Internet (phone calls). In the past few years, I have facilitated conversion of the Africa Region’s financial accounting and reporting to a computer-based system by which the five branch offices submit their monthly reports to the Region via email, the Region’s monthly reports to Maryknoll Center are sent by email, and funds transfers from New York to Africa and then from the Region to the Districts are all transacted via online banking.

Now I am embarking on an even greater adventure, one that begins to reveal the true scope of the Information Revolution that is transforming life on earth. As I mentioned several years ago in this newsletter, I have been a proponent of assuring that the advent of computers and the Internet benefits the developing world as well as the developed world. My current ministry allows me to facilitate just that hope. I have been asked to take the position of Head of the Department of Academic Computing at the Bugando University College of Health Sciences (BUCHS) in Mwanza, Tanzania. Third World medical schools were always at a disadvantage when medical education depended upon multi-million dollar libraries with annual budgets of hundreds of thousands of dollars which were needed to purchase the latest texts and journals. Now through the miracle of the Web, medical schools in the poorest nations can access the very same information — current texts and journals — as any university in the developed world. The World Health Organization has taken a lead in making this possible. It has been actively encouraging the publishers of medical books and journals to make their online versions available free-of-charge to Third World med schools.

The Tanzanian government has wisely removed all taxes from computer equipment, allowing BUCHS to purchase complete computer systems for \$700 each. The local telephone company has connected the University computer network to the Internet backbone with a high-speed, broadband, leased line. The BUCHS students and staff will have free and unlimited access to the information of the world. On a daily basis, problem-based learning sessions will be conducted in the two computer classrooms. While being guided by instructors, the students will be given real-world medical problems that they will discuss together and research via the Internet. They will learn how to use the online resources to investigate, diagnose and treat medical conditions about which they are not familiar. They will have access to the advice of medical specialists from around the world. This will also bring about long-term benefits to the quality of health care throughout Tanzania. Whereas in the past, there were virtually no medical libraries for doctors to consult; BUCHS graduates will know how to access the global network of medical information from any of the Internet cafes that have proliferated in the cities and towns of the nation (offering Internet access for a mere U.S. \$0.60 per hour).

This ground-breaking step in educational methodology is being watched with keen interest by the government’s Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. I am confident that in the not-too-distant future, similar models will upgrade many sectors of the Tanzanian educational system. It is my dream that one day all of Africa’s children will attend classes in cyberspace, learning alongside students of every nation in a worldwide school. Indeed, the Information Revolution and the Internet will change everything.

Clinical Pastoral Education and Pastoral Care in Africa

By John Eybel

“Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and Pastoral Care in Africa” is the name of an e-mail discussion list of about 180 CPE supervisors and pastors. Most are in USA and Africa and a few from Europe. One fruitful discussion that generated interest featured my experience at Bugando Medical Centre (BMC) in Mwanza, Tanzania after a tragic bus accident near Nyegezi last year. I went to the hospital wards the night of the accident to visit those who had been admitted. One man with multiple injuries from the accident was most grateful that I stopped to pray with him. Before I left he asked me if I would call on his wife whom, he was told, was being treated for her injuries on a woman’s ward. I agreed.

I found that no one with his wife’s name had been admitted after the accident. With some dread I checked the mortuary and sure enough his wife was among those who had died on the way to the hospital. I also found out that the body had already been taken for burial. I decided that it would be best to look for the family members and speak with them first before returning to the man. (NOTE: I called him with the fictitious name “Gaspar” as I shared this unfolding story on a day-by-day basis with our e-mail list of subscribers.) Gaspar’s brothers and brother-in-law thanked me for attending to their patient and then explained that they had told him the story about his wife being admitted and treated on the women’s ward and about her getting on just fine. Hesitatingly, I joined in on the conspiracy to conceal the truth with a story. We agreed to tell Gaspar the truth when the day came that he could walk and would want to see his wife.

Meanwhile I reported these events to readers of the “CPE and Pastoral Care in Africa” e-mail discussion list and a good number of responses were forthcoming. The swiftest and most adamant comments came from Americans who warned me that I had compromised my position as a trusted pastor by participating in the deception. The Africans came to my defense that it was the most compassionate way to respond in those circumstances.

We followed our plan to tell Gaspar the truth. We organized the event and discussed who should be the spokesperson. I was voted to be the informant but I suggested that the others would regret it later if they avoided that task now. So the oldest was chosen instead. I prepared a suitable place in the hospital, invited some sisters to pray with us, read a psalm, and then let the elder do his duty. He did a wonderful job and apologized for the deception in the process. As Gaspar, the new widower, grieved in the hospital I took the relatives to town where one brother lives. They took pictures of the burial place for Gaspar to view later.

There was contentment among us on how we managed the affair. Did Gaspar really suspect what was up as some American list subscribers suspected? Did Gaspar have any resentment later on? A month after his release from BMC I visited his brother in town and asked those questions. By then Gaspar had returned to Shinyanga. His brother’s answer was “no” to both questions and he reported gratitude from Gaspar for the support we gave him. That an issue of culture had been dramatically described for subscribers to our e-mail list to consider is a concrete achievement of the use of the Internet. All are welcome to subscribe, read and share in our list discussions.

I Pointed Out To You the Stars

By Joe Healey

Through the help of the Urban Ministries Support Group (UMSG) based in Nairobi, Kenya, we started in June, 1998 an Internet Website and E-mail Discussion List (a type of "Electronic Mailing List" or "LISTSERV" in the Internet World Wide Web language) on "African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories:"

African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories Website

www.afriprov.org

African Proverbs E-mail Discussion List

proverbs-list@afriprov.org

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What is unique is that the origin and starting point is Africa itself. With the renewed interest in African Oral Literature and African culture in general we try to provide a forum for people to share their interest and experiences in researching, collecting, writing about and using "African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories." With the marvels of this new information technology we can use this Internet Website to:

1. Share our own work (collections, research, writings, applications, experiences) and enthusiasm for "African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories" with other people with similar interests.
2. Ask questions of, and obtain materials from, other people with similar interests.
3. Compile an ongoing collection of a wide variety of resources (in the form of an select annotated bibliography) related to "African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories."
4. Support and encourage different people involved in this wonderful world of "African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories."
5. Develop and expand a worldwide network of people interested in "African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories."



I am the Moderator of this African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories Website and E-mail Discussion List based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The Assistant Moderator is Joseph Kariuki based in Nairobi, Kenya. The Administrator of the website is Mr. Nicholas Adongo based in Nairobi, Kenya. Among the technical advisers is Dave Smith. Anyone is welcome to subscribe to this Discussion List and thus automatically receive e-mail messages. Anyone is welcome to post a message, specific information, a question, resource materials, etc., to this e-mail address. We have an "open" discussion group with no prior monitoring of your messages. Controls are put in only if necessary. We try to make it a participatory website.

This African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories Website includes sections on:

Resources: Daily African Proverb, African Proverb Calendar, African Proverb of the Month, African Stories, Bibliography, Book Reviews, CDs, E-Books, Links, Maps of Africa, Meetings and What's New.
Services: Subscribe/Unsubscribe to List, Downloads, Regional Centers, Counter and Search Engine.

A special feature of this website is to circulate worldwide an "African Proverb of the Month." We post an important proverb from a different African country every month. We use a simple format that includes:

1. Background, Explanation and Everyday Use
2. Biblical Parallels
3. Contemporary Use and Religious Application

Some of the African proverbs contributed by Maryknollers to the website are as follows:

1. George Cotter: December 1998 -- January 1999: *By persevering the egg walks on legs* (Oromo, Ethiopia).
2. John Eybel: November 1999: *One who bathes willingly with cold water doesn't feel the cold* (Fipa, Tanzania).
3. Don Sybertz and George Cotter: July 2000: *Do not insult the hunting guide before the sun has set* (Sukuma, Tanzania).
4. Frank Flynn: April 2002: *Slowly, slowly, porridge goes into the gourd* (Kuria, Kenya/Tanzania).



Dick Baker will be posting an Anyuak, Ethiopia proverb in 2003.

I posted my favorite African proverb: *I pointed out to you the stars (the moon) and all you saw was the tip of my finger* (Sukuma, Tanzania). Like many African proverbs this Sukuma proverb has different wordings or versions. One version has *all you saw was my finger* at the end. Once I used this version in a talk on Africa to an ecumenical gathering in Islip, New York. There was a roar of laughter that I didn't understand until someone discreetly took me aside after the talk and explained the negative cultural significance of "finger" in American society. Needless to say, I have included the words *the tip of* ever since. This dramatically shows that inculturation is just as important to the United States as in Africa.

Quotations from *Pope John Paul II's Message for the 36th World Communications Day 2002*: "Internet: A New Forum for Proclaiming the Gospel" ("Internet ["Mdahalishi" au "Mtandao"] ni Mbinu Mpya ya Uenezaji Injili").

Issued 24 January 2002. Celebrated in Kenya on May 12, 2002, in Tanzania on 4 August, 2002

NOTE: Meaning of the word "forum:" a. The marketplace or public place of an ancient Roman city forming the center of judicial and public business. b: a public meeting place for open discussion. c : a medium of communications (as a newspaper) of open discussion or expression of ideas.

No. 2. "The age of the great discoveries, the Renaissance and the invention of printing, the Industrial Revolution and the birth of the modern world: these too were **threshold moments which demanded new forms of evangelization**. Now, with the communications and information revolution in full swing, the Church stands unmistakably at **another decisive gateway**."

No. 3. "It is important, therefore, that the Christian community think of very practical ways of helping those who first make contact through the Internet to move from the **virtual world of cyberspace to the real world of Christian community**. At a subsequent stage, the Internet can also provide the kind of follow-up which evangelization requires."

No. 5. "The fact that through the Internet people multiply their contacts in ways hitherto unthinkable **opens up wonderful possibilities for spreading the Gospel...** How can we ensure that the information and communications revolution which has the Internet as its prime engine will work in favor of the globalization of human development and solidarity, objectives closely linked to the Church's evangelizing mission?"

No. 6. "The Internet causes billions of images to appear on millions of computer monitors around the planet. From this galaxy of sight and sound will the face of Christ emerge and the voice of Christ be heard? For it is only when his face is seen and his voice heard that the world will know the glad tidings of our redemption. **This is the purpose of evangelization. And this is what will make the Internet a genuinely human space, for if there is no room for Christ, there is no room for man.**"

All these annual messages from 1979-2002 in six languages are on the Vatican Website at: www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/communications/index.htm

Happy Birthday to You!

John Lange	18 January	Ed Davis	6 April
David Smith	19 January	Maurice Zerr	7 April
William Stanley	19 January	Francis Flynn	26 April
Donald Donovan	20 January	Arthur Wille	27 April
Frank TenHoopen	25 January	Joseph Healey	29 April
Cyril Vellicig	28 January		
José Padin	28 January		
Richard Baker	31 January		
Thomas Tiscornia	5 February		
Lance Nadeau	10 February		
Robert Vujs	17 February		



Maryknoll Brother Candidate Visits Kowak

By Ed Hayes

Doctor Daniel Burnham, a Maryknoll Brother Candidate, arrived at Kowak, Tanzania in mid-June 2002 and spent six weeks with us. In early August he spent a few days in Mwanza with Jim Eble, visiting Bugando Hospital and Jim's pastoral work in Mabatini, a very crowded area of Mwanza on the Musoma Road. After three days in Nairobi, Kenya he left for the States on 9 August. Dan, a Family Practice and Emergency Room physician, is originally from Massachusetts. He is 37 years old, and a graduate of Brown University and the University of California (San Francisco) Medical School. In January 2002, Dan entered the Maryknoll Formation Program in Chicago. He took some courses in Theology and Philosophy. In September 2002 he began his Spiritual Year at Maryknoll, NY.

All of the Kowak community enjoyed having Dan with us. He was a great help at the hospital and developed a wonderful relationship with both the staff and the patients. Shortly before he left, the Staff of the hospital held a farewell meal and celebration. The "choir" was great. It consisted of all the hospital workers including the watchmen! Their best song was "*Tunamwaga Daniel, tunalilia.*" As Eppy James would have said, "There wasn't a dry seat in the house!" Besides the hospital work Dan assisted our Tanzanian Pastoral Year Seminarian each Sunday at the "Sunday Service Without a Priest" and also learned to be a pretty good pinochle player. It was a pleasure having Dan with us. We put some special *dawa* in his *uji* one morning to make sure that he returns to Africa after his Formation program! *Asante sana, Daktari Dan. Karibu tena.*

Is Evangelization Still In?

By Dan Ohmann

Is EVANGELIZATION still in? If it is, what is it? If there is a FIRST EVANGELIZATION, what is the next?

Don Sybertz and I were invited to attend a meeting of the Spiritans (formerly called the Holy Ghost Missionaries) involved in First Evangelization at the Spiritan House in Arusha, Tanzania on 2-3 August.2002. Twenty Spiritans were present; half white (old – except for one Irishman ordained three years), half African (young). They were priests living with the Pokot and Maasai in Kenya, Maasai in Tanzania, one priest was from Uganda, one from the Congo, one from Zambia.

Similar first evangelization meetings were held in Kenya from 1977 to 1983 under the title of the APOSTOLATE TO THE NOMADS. At that time it was felt that a special apostolate was necessary for nomadic people. The purpose of this present meeting was "to get to know one another, to share one another's experiences in the different places, and to surface common approaches and problems."

Certainly this purpose was accomplished. Many approaches were discussed, even some I'd never heard of such as the "waving apostolate:" that's where you wave to the people as you drive by doing development projects and social services; and the "night apostolate" that is catechizing at night when everyone was available -- the men were back from herding the women had milked the cows and cooked, the children and all had eaten. People gathered around a bonfire reciting prayers, learning hymns, and hearing Gospel stories.

The clearest definition of evangelization seems to me to be "the presentation of the Gospel in a way that touches the core of the human, the person, being." To do this there is the necessity of basic linguistics and anthropology. Knowledge of the language and culture are absolute. How do you make contact between Christian beliefs and local beliefs and practices? What and where are the similarities and the differences? Meeting with the ethnic group elders seems necessary to get the local stories, myths, songs, etc. and their meaning. Then how do you use them to meet the Gospel stories and their meaning?

In trying to evaluate what went on it seemed to me that there were two values being discussed in the seminar:

1. Getting the Gospel message into the root of ethnic group living,
2. Getting the unity, present and future, of all ethnic groups through the uniform Christian, Catholic way of praying and worshipping.

This observation comes mainly from discussing with younger African Spiritans outside the sessions. The elder participants leaning toward the first, the younger toward the second. Both, it seems to me, have equal value. It is necessary to have the Gospel reach the root level. It is also necessary to bring unity of young and old, and of different ethnic groups through language and liturgy.

One group says "Why go through all the trouble of studying the language, the culture, developing local liturgies when the one following me will throw out everything?" The other group says these introductions divide young and old and ethnic groups. My own opinion: With the big emphasis on education and with schools in every village in Tanzania within a few years everyone will know Kiswahili. The official language for mass, sacraments and liturgies will be Kiswahili for everyone. Yet, the home, the Catholic family is where the culture and faith meet and is lived. Also Catholic families will need each other in first or primary evangelization to survive and grow in faith and mission. This makes the Small Christian Communities (SCCs) necessary and this is where inculturation should take place.

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NOTE: By putting the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers Africa Region Address in the signature John is encouraging people to link to our Maryknoll Website. This is user friendly.

2. African Proverbs, Sayings and Stories E-mail Discussion List (from Nairobi, Kenya). About 170 subscribers. E-mail: proverbs-list@afriprov.org

Another valuable way of evangelizing through the Internet is an E-mail Mailing List (one-way communications from the Sender to the Receiver with no exchange or direct feedback). Examples are:

1. Messages containing announcements, information, news, updates, Press Releases, documents, agendas of meetings, greetings, etc

2. Electronic News Services, Newsletters:

The Maryknoll Society Africa Regional Office in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania actively uses computer equipment, e-mail and Internet. The Office Manager Boni Noronha writes:

Internet Communication in our Regional Office here in Dar es Salaam is a relatively new phenomenon. With this innovation a multitude of works can be performed such as editing and scanning without shifting facilities or offices. The Internet is an easy, hands-on gadget that has revolutionized repetitive and sometime even boring office routines into fun and brain teasing discoveries.

The Maryknoll Africa Region E-mail Mailing List (automatically sent to all members with email addresses) communicates regional news, updates of the Address List, agendas and reports of meetings, the monthly *Council Bulletin*, Death Notices, etc. During the recently completed Eleventh General Chapter a daily News Bulletin was sent from the African Delegates at Maryknoll, New York instantaneously to everyone in the region.

The missionary commitment to spread the Good News of Salvation through the Internet is expressed in the Ganda (Uganda) proverb: *One who sees something good must narrate it*. That we have made a good beginning in Africa but must stretch even further is expressed in the Sukuma (Tanzania) proverb: *That which is good is never finished*.

Call for Articles for Our Next Issue

Date: April, 2003

Theme: Serving Suffering People in Africa

Material to Editor by: 1 February 2003

Please send material to the Editor, Joe Healey, by Email to:

JGHealey@aol.com or by paper mail to: Maryknoll Society House,
 P.O. Box 867, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (for scanning into a computer).