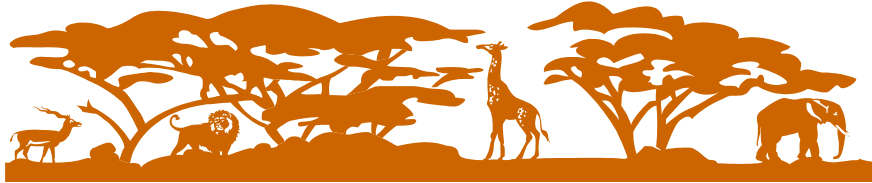


MARYKNOLL FATHERS & BROTHERS

AFRICA REGION



August 2005

Styles of Retirement in Africa

This newsletter theme was chosen in consultation with the Africa Regional Council to reflect an important dimension of our missionary life and work here in Africa. In the new *Strategic Plan of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers Africa Region*, Goal 6 states: "To be a region that honors our elders. To be sensitive to our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs as we age. To be open to what our elders are able to contribute to the Region. To encourage them to remain with us here in Africa for as long as they are able and want to be with us within the limits of the Region's ability to offer adequate care."

Many feel this is an interesting and timely theme. This present issue of our newsletter focuses on Maryknoll priests and brothers who are "retiring in Africa itself:" both those in "active retirement" in the region and those who belong to the Retirement Community (RC). We find that retirement means different things to different people. So the umbrella term "Styles of Retirement in Africa" suggests the flexibility and multiple options of our lived reality. The Africa Region is always open to Maryknollers who want to spend their sunset/golden years with us and continue to share their experience and wisdom.

Presently in the Africa Region there are five Maryknoll priests in the Retirement Community (RC) and seven priests and two Brothers who are retired in the region. All continue to lead happy, productive lives. Our first article provides some glimpses into their ongoing missionary ministries. The experience of the Africa Region has much to share with the rest of the Maryknoll World.

We welcome Maryknollers from other regions who would like to retire here in the Africa Region. One Maryknoll priest who worked in Latin America said, "I liked Latin America, but in my later years I wanted a change. So I decided on Africa." We also welcome Maryknollers who are retired in the United States, but who want to stay "connected" in special ways to the Africa Region.

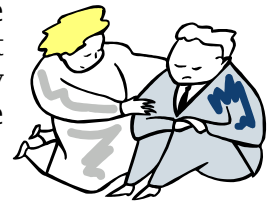
Glimpses of Maryknollers in Retirement

My Happiest Days of Priesthood

Theme
Article

Compiled with assistance from Ken Sullivan and Joe Fedora (Maryknoll Magazine)

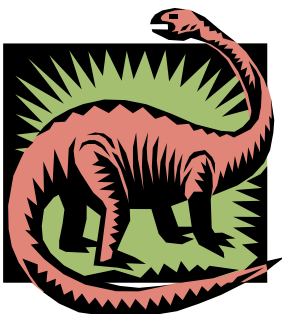
The happiest years of priesthood for Ken Sullivan began the day he retired. On that day in Musoma, Tanzania in 1997 the administrative headaches of being a pastor disappeared, and Ken became able to dedicate all of his time to doing what he enjoys most: accompanying the sick. From Monday through Saturday Ken—together with his friend Lukas Juma Gabrieli, a pastoral agent - visits people with HIV/AIDS. Given the overwhelming number of Tanzanians who suffer from the disease, visiting AIDS patients in Musoma demands not only endurance but also a tender heart. "Like Jesus, I try to be compassionate to people during the most difficult time of their life," Sullivan says. "I'm not afraid to take their hand and to touch them. I want them to know I'm happy to be with them." For Ken, giving the sick hope through his visits is what he enjoys most and that, he emphasizes, is what retirement is all about.



That Which Is Good Is Never Finished

Compiled with assistance from Don Sybertz

Don Sybertz retired in the Africa Region in January, 2001, but he still continues to work full time in inculturation and evangelization. Based at Ndoleleji Parish in Shinyanga Diocese, Tanzania he meets with small groups of Sukuma elders to research Sukuma proverbs, sayings, stories, and songs. The elders discuss the proverbs at length and eventually come up with: the Background Explanation and Everyday Use; Biblical Parallels; and Contemporary Use and Religious Application. Recently Don put the final touches on the famous Sukuma myth "Masala Kulangwa and the Monster Shing'weng'we" with complete versions in Sukuma, Swahili, and English. A shortened version is found in the new book *African Stories for Preachers and Teachers* (Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa, 2005).



When he is not passionately rooting for his beloved Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots, Don tries to make the connections between the Sukuma culture/oral traditions and the biblical and religious teaching to develop an authentic African Christianity. He says that he will be happy collecting proverbs until he dies and quotes the Sukuma proverb that says, *That which is good is never finished.*

ONLY IF I . . .

By John Conway

After my retirement from the seminary in Nairobi, Kenya, and beginning with my retirement in the Africa Region, I began a serious investment with people whose lives are troubled and daily damaged by their use of alcohol and other mood-altering chemicals. For the past seven months I have spent three hours each week with Lackmaisha. She was brought to my attention through an intervention by family members concerned by her loss of jobs, erratic behaviors, physical shaking, staggering, loss of memory and the repeated occurrence of invasive infections. Lackmaisha, a Catholic, is illiterate. It was important for her to have a one-on-one situation in addition to meetings and the fellowship of women and men in recovery. She has been sober for the past seven months, is working regularly and a

contributing member of her family and, despite her limited schooling, has made the connection between her Catholic faith and the spirituality of Alcoholics Anonymous. All of this is the work of grace. But I can facilitate this grace for her and others ONLY IF I.....

In the relative leisure of retirement, I have the opportunity to bring communion to some who are elderly, sick and shut in. Mrs. P is ninety-one. Some 20 years ago she threw her son out of the house because of his drinking and destructive behavior. He died drunk and alone. Only after some days was his body discovered. Over the months of our praying and listening together, Mrs. P has been healed of this horrendous and hurtful memory. Slowly she has been able to place this event in the hands of God. The burden has been lifted away through the Eucharist and faith-filled conversations. She remembered. She acknowledged. She wept. She turned all of it over. All of this is the work of grace. But I can facilitate this grace for her and others ONLY IF I.....



My Hobby is Setting up a New Parish in Nairobi

By Bob Vujs



Retirement wisdom says, "Get a hobby." Listening to this wisdom I do have a hobby. It is setting up a new parish in Tassia Estate in Eastlands, Nairobi, Kenya. You say, "Who is he kidding!! Setting up a new parish is a full time apostolate, not a hobby." I do not disagree with you, but my attitude is that what changes is how I function. I am not assigned to set up a new parish. I just enjoy my hobby. I set my own pace. I do what I can. I do not meet goals and targets. I just function as an active grandfather who has a pool of skills to give the community. As a grandfather it is hard for others to pressure me. There is a subtle respect from the parishioners that makes things flow smoothly. They know I have a good track record in setting up parishes and that I am only interested in their good. On my side I take very few things seriously. I've been through it all. For example, what would be construction headaches for others is a laughing matter to me. Personnel hassles are just normal daily living. On the other hand the only real annoyance for me is the matter of justice in our slum area. I have to watch that this does not eat me up emotionally. So far so good for "Grandpa."

Chaplain to University Students in Namibia

Compiled with assistance from Dick Albertine

Who says Dick Albertine is retired? He is active as ever. One of his ministries in Windhoek, Namibia is chaplain to university students - at the University of Namibia (UNAM) and at the Windhoek School of Education. Primary is the celebration of the Sunday Liturgy on each campus. Dick's lively participatory homilies engage the 60 young men and women from various African countries at UNAM. Then there is the weekly Small Christian Community of students also called "Bible Study" and "Bible Reflection." Here is an example: After Pope John Paul II died in April, 2005 15 UNAM students (seven girls and eight boys) gathered for about one hour and fifteen minutes on Wednesday evening in a vacant classroom to reflect on the deceased pope's importance for the world based on *Acts of the Apostles*, Chapter 2 and the *Gospel of St. John*, Chapter 17. There was a good group dynamic that included five to six minute sharing in smaller groups of three students each. Occasionally Dick helps to facilitate "encounter weekends" for the students.



Retirement Can Become a Happy Time

By Wayne Weinlader

Theme
Article

I was retired for medical reasons in 1994. However, by 2000 I felt my health had returned sufficiently that I could go to a mission assignment. So I began looking for a place where I could make a contribution while still maintaining my health. I needed to find a country where I did not have to learn a new language and I also realized that it was not good to try to go backwards; that is, return to a country where I had worked in my younger years.

After some searching, I was invited to visit Namibia in Southwest Africa. In January of 2004, I came here on a three month tourist visa. During those three months, I was able to discover that I could make a contribution here, that I could work in the English language, that living conditions were good enough that I could maintain my precarious health, and finally that I would not be a burden to the Maryknoll personnel already working here. I had to leave Namibia at the end of my tourist visa. However, I returned within a couple months as soon as I got my work visa.

 Roman Catholic Church Namibia Pastoral Plan theme: "Community serving Humanity"		
Windhoek Archdiocese Administration Parishes Priests Hospitals/Clinics Schools Religious		Archbishop Liborius N. Nashenda OMI Archbishop of Windhoek
Keetmanshoop Diocese Administration Parishes Priests Hospitals/Clinics Schools Religious		Monsignor Klaus Lettner Administrator of Keetmanshoop
Rundu Vicariate Administration Parishes Priests Hospitals/Clinics Schools Religious		Bishop Joseph S. Shikongo OMI Bishop of Rundu

I now serve the local church in two different ways. First, I assist Archbishop Liborius Nashenda, the Archbishop of Windhoek, with his computer and technical needs such as constructing and maintaining a website for the Namibian Catholic Bishops Conference. Second, I work with AIDS orphans in the poorest section of the capital city Windhoek.

The bishops had wanted a website for some years but did not feel the Catholic bishops could afford the cost of creation and maintenance. Therefore, my offer to create and maintain the website was readily accepted by them. The name of the website is "Roman Catholic Church of Namibia" and the URL address is: www.rcchurch.na. The

website is already up on the internet and each month I add more parish, school, or hospital webpages. My next challenge is to begin training a local religious to maintain the website because at age 69, one never knows when God will call me. I also will be teaching a course on computers at the national major seminary in Windhoek.

AIDS orphans present a huge challenge here in Namibia; through no fault of their own, they have become almost like the modern day lepers. They have no parents, they are terribly poor, and over 50% of them are HIV positive and at least 25% are fighting AIDS themselves. I felt called to this particular ministry because having suffered radiation poisoning during the First Gulf War, I too, suffer from a damaged immune system. However, my damaged immune system does not continue to deteriorate as does an HIV positive child. To this end, I devote most of my time and all of my money to serving these orphan children. The project through which I work is the Children's Hope Project.



We run a soup kitchen six days a week for 150 to 200 orphans. I provide all the food which consists of rice, beans, peas, cabbage, potatoes, onions and beef or chicken soup powder plus fresh bread. Before their meal, we also provide a glass of e'pap which is a nutrition supplement for AIDS children. After their meal we try to provide either a lollipop or a piece of fruit. The dietitian at the Catholic Hospital helped me determine the menu to make sure the children are getting proper nutrition. The signs of malnutrition are declining with each passing day as one sees the children looking more and more healthy.

We also run a School Readiness Program for older orphans. They have not been in school at all and cannot get into school without some preparation. We have some 40 or 50 children in the program.

They are taught by young volunteers from various countries who usually are expatriate girls like you would find in Peace Corps. One volunteer is Mary Beth Gallagher who served two terms as a Maryknoll lay missionary in El Salvador and now is serving in Namibia as a volunteer. The children come at 8 a.m. and we give them a breakfast of corn meal mixed with sugar and peanut butter for flavor. Then they attend class all morning.



We have just begun another program for those orphans who have completed the school readiness classes. We now have 15 of these children in a public boarding school in the country. The boarding school is designed for farm worker children who do not live near a school, and it is supported by the government. Therefore, our cost is only US \$250 per student per year which makes it very affordable. It is a great success; it not only provides the children a place to live but it also provides them with an education. I help to financially support this great program.

Retirement can become a happy time if one can keep busy doing the Lord's work. I am now happier and healthier than I was in retirement in the U.S.A., and I pray God will continue to sustain me as I tend these poor orphans in his flock.

Retirement in Africa

By Don Larmore

Theme
Article

RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

I refuse this
Ageism of prejudicial proportions
This fencing off from lifeism
With a
Rageism,
That is not
My usual
Mild-manneredism.



Retirement is a emotional charged Americanism that
Is meant to shelve those
Who are entering
The most mystic
And energetically fantastic part of life,
Because Americans passionately reject prophetic
mysticism.

Preparation of death? Hell and Purgatory,
We have already gone to the Zero of death
144,000 times in this life
if we have touched
Poverty of Spirit for
30 seconds.

After listening to Richard Rohr's
Tapes on Ascent and Descent
I know that age has nothing to do
With deaths and resurrections
Zeros and numbers
Descents and ascents.

Let's call it
Finely tuned Maryknoll
Perfectly Aged and vintage Maryknoll
The Maryknoll of Foundation Reality

The Maryknoll Association of Closet Mystics
The Maryknoll of Post-Documentational Work
The Maryknoll of New Mission Trends
The Maryknollers of Intercession
Maryknoll beyond Maryknoll Magazine
But not
The Maryknoll Retirement Community.

Give me a break—Americanism for Shelving?
People with a world stature on a Global Stage
Do not retire
They aspire.
They savooour
Slow food
Orchestrated silences
Finely-tuned prayer
The most ordinary of the ordinary
Their Dad who is in Heaven
Their Elder Brother who is on Earth
Their Spirit of Oneness with everyone.

They have heard these words with their brothers and
Sisters all over the Globe.
"You are my beloved
In you I am very well pleased.
Listen to them."
As they shine on the Mountain
And confer with the elders
Like Pope John XXIII who popped from
Age 77-81.

Defuse the name
Trash the title
Prophecy to the whole planet
Be Maryknoll more than ever before
Wherever you may be.



Bishop Edward McGurkin's 100th Anniversary

by David L. McCormick

I enjoyed reading the historical account of my Great Uncle [Bishop Edward McGurkin]'s tenure in Shinyanga in the article "Shinyanga: Falling in Love with the Sukuma People" by David A. Smith in *The Buffaloes -- a Story Commemorating Maryknoll Society's 50 Years in Tanzania* (www.maryknollafrica.org/History7.htm).

As a boy, it was always a big event when Uncle Ed came home and he remains a strong influence in my life. He was known to have cured me from a serious illness on one of his visits. He prayed over my crib and I responded by sitting up and asking for something to eat. As a father, I prayed to him asking that he heal my daughter's malformed spinal cord. She had a corrective surgery once and was faced with a repeat surgery. Knowing how difficult the surgery would be, I prayed for his intervention. We requested that her tests be repeated before the surgery, and her condition was miraculously resolved. Bishop McGurkin would be 100 years old next week (June, 2005)...

Thank you for the all of the good work that Maryknoll does. I hope to become more involved in Maryknoll at a later point in my life. Currently, my children are still young and I will be working in the mainstream for quite a while. Actually, it was Uncle Ed who led us to our two youngest children. He was in Manchuria prior to Africa and he always spoke fondly of the Chinese people. I believe it was that memory that inspired my wife and me to adopt two of our children from China. As a missionary, you never know just how far reaching your influence is!

Missionary Outreach of Mtoni Parish in Dar es Salaam through the Eyes of lay People

By John P. Mbonde

On Sunday, 30 January 2005 I visited St. Josephine Bakhita Parish, Mtoni, Dar es Salaam and met Father Ed Davis, M.M., the parish priest and his assistant Father Paul Kam, a Chinese diocesan priest from Hong Kong. The parish is situated a few kilometers from the Dar es Salaam city centre along the Kilwa Road. The parishioners are from more than 50 ethnic groups from all over Tanzania. The buildings of the parish are situated in a highly populated diaspora area of various religious beliefs mainly Muslims who make up approximately 70% of the population.

It was a rare opportunity for me to interview ten parishioners, both men and women of all ages. They spoke very highly about the work of the priests among the people in the area irrespective of their religious beliefs. The role played by the 29 Small Christian Communities (SCCs) in this parish is very significant as far as the evangelization by lay people is concerned.



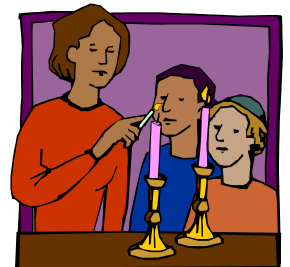
During the interview a young girl of 15 observed that some elders in the community are not keen on the missionary work of evangelization. The girl said, "But it is the duty of all those who have been baptized to come forward and preach the Gospel to all the people. This was emphasized by Pope John Paul II in Moshi when he visited Tanzania in 1990." This was followed by serious remarks given by an old woman who criticized men for their laziness in attending Small Christian Community meetings. "Their absence in such gatherings weakens the spirit of the work of evangelization. It seems to them as if this

is the duty of the women and children alone!” She called upon the men to examine themselves so that they too become involved in proclamation of the Good News. She also hoped that the parish council will plan some seminars, workshops, and meetings so that these men can change their negative attitudes.



A young boy enthusiastically stressed that some of the highly educated Catholics in their parish have set a good example of participating fully in the proclamation of the Gospel in the community. On top of that he challenged those individuals with high-ranking posts in the government to come forward resourcefully in promoting the spirit of proclaiming the Gospel. “Although we have good schedules among the parishioners for visiting the sick (a special ministry every Thursday morning), house to house visitation of the Legion of Mary, helping the needy, and advising those who are weak in their faith, we still have a long way to go to wipe out the wrong notion that the missionary work is the sole responsibility of the clergy and catechists,” a woman leader of WAWATA (the Catholic women’s group) remarked.

“Indeed, nowadays, many cults that have mushroomed among the Christian community, and they pose a big problem to the effectiveness of our work of evangelization. In view of this situation we Catholics have to be firm lest we become influenced. Another dilemma facing us today is the laxity of the parents in educating their children. After their first communion or confirmation the children should carry on practicing the faith and strictly adhere to our Catholic rules,” a young man emphasized. He further added, “The problems of child abuse, street children, drug addicts, etc. have their roots in the irresponsibility of some parents, particularly the fathers. I strongly commend the role played by the children in their Pontifical Missionary Society of the Holy Childhood; this should be supported. Each and every Small Christian Community must nurture and help the children materially and spiritually in order to achieve a sustainable evangelization in our parish.”



One old man said, “We Catholics have to pull up our socks in this complicated world coupled with globalization and other vast developments in science and technology. Our youth are unfortunately engulfed in various problems and so they fail to adhere to their Christian practices. Unemployment and meager economic resources compound this problem. Consequently the work of proclaiming the Gospel calls for even more vigorous and collective efforts by all the baptized all the time. We must show good actions, for example, by having harmonious dialogue with Muslims who live with us and show religious tolerance in our daily lives. Let us maintain the spirit of good neighborliness with the purpose of combating our problems. In so doing we will do our duty of evangelization.”

All ten lay people also appreciated the good work carried out by their parish council, different parish associations and other parish organs that enhance the continuity of the work of Jesus Christ. All in all, they reminded other parishioners and other Catholics elsewhere to actively be involved in proclamation of the Good News to all people. “We pray that our country of Tanzania should maintain peace, love and respect of each other regardless of one’s religion.”

(Based on a joint interview with: Leonardina Alphonse, Pancras John, Colleta Joseph, Scholastica Kilundi, Jerome Msangi, Travis Obbas, Polycarp Simon, Maristella Songolo, Angelina Tarimo, and Janet Wambura)

Happy Birthday to You!

Edward Phillips	Sept. 1	Paul Kam	Nov. 24
Ramon McCabe	Sept. 15	James Conard	Nov. 27
John Frangenberg	Sept. 15	Kenneth Sullivan	Dec. 13
Donald Larmore	Sept. 20	Michael Kirwen	Dec. 15
Richard Quinn	Sept. 27	James Eble	Dec. 17
William Daley	Oct. 4	Wayne Weinlader	Dec. 21
Mark Gruenke	Oct. 16		
Mark Huntington	Oct. 20		
Paul Fagan	Oct. 24		
Edward Hayes	Nov. 13		
George Cotter	Nov. 22		



Remembering our Maryknoll Ancestors

September

Fr. Joseph Glynn	Sept. 13, 1990
Br. Fidelis Deichelbohrer	Sept. 23, 1983

October

Fr. Alan Smidlein	Oct. 2, 1988
Fr. James Lenihan	Oct. 2, 1998
Fr. Phillip McCue	Oct. 20, 1998

November

Fr. Daniel O'Brien	Nov. 11, 1991
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Fr. Edward Baskerville	Nov. 13, 1975
Fr. John Bergwall	Nov. 14, 1996
Fr. John Graser	Nov. 15, 1992
Fr. Michael Duffy	Nov. 16, 1999
Fr. Richard A. Hochwalt	Nov. 16, 2003
Fr. Edward James	Nov. 18, 1987
Fr. Thomas Quirk	Nov. 23, 1979

December

Fr. Gerard J. Grondin	Dec. 3, 1966
Fr. J. Francis Flynn	Dec. 13, 2003

Call for Articles for Our Next Issue

Date: December, 2005

Theme: Towards Becoming a Small and Vital Africa Region

Material to Editor by: 15 October 2005

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).