



SPRING 2024

VOICES OF OUR WORLD

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Director's Welcome

Hi friends! I hope this newsletter finds you well. The Vocations Team prepared this edition thinking not only of your vocation discernment as a priest or brother but also in your interest in mission. This past January, I attended the Maryknoll Central America Pilgrim Retreat in which a total of 20 participants traveled to El Salvador and Guatemala to learn about the life of martyrs – men and women, lay and religious – who sacrificed their lives for the gospel.

I didn't join Maryknoll to become a martyr. In fact, I stayed away and kept my distance from the lives of martyrs because, my understanding back then was that I entered Maryknoll to live, not to die! But after visiting the holy places where people like Bishop Oscar Romero, Sr. Ita Ford, Fr. Bill Woods, Bishop Juan Gerardi, Sr. Maura Clark and Fr. Rutilio Grande, to name some, willingly preferred to stay and remain with their people under precarious conditions, was without a doubt a revelation to my vocation. This Lenten season, read the life of a 21st-century martyr and learn how that person answered the call. These are the holy men and women who can inspire our young generation. Thanks for reading! God bless you.

– Fr. Rodrigo



Fr. Rodrigo points to Maryknoll Fr. Bill Woods who is a part of the mural of martyrs in San Sebastian Church, Guatemala.

Re: “Voices of Our World”

In preparing this newsletter, we're reminded of how we stand upon the shoulders of those who came before us.

For many years, Maryknoll Father Mike Snyder curated and shared Maryknoll stories with discerners as a way encouraging their calling. We are grateful for his work on the newsletter version preceding this one. We hope we can continue his inspiring example.

The name of our revamped newsletter – “Voices of Our World” – is also our shout-out to Maryknoll's award-winning weekly radio broadcast of the same name. Airing from 1984 to 2013, it featured stories of social justice, peacemaking, civil rights, globalization, care for Creation, and the lives of those who are often overlooked. These voices of our world summon us still.

“Vocare” (“to call”) is the Latin root common to the words “voices” and “vocation”. Our calling as missionaries is a response to the voices we hear of our world – voices of need crying to be heard; voices of joy singing to be shared. These voices of our world compel us to act from yet another voice; that infinitely deep and still small voice of God that whispers within – “love one another as I have loved you.” In this way, the voices of our world echo within the vocation of every Maryknoller and compel a response – God's mission. We pray that these voices might touch and transform your heart as well.

From Our Archives



Guatemalans remember Maryknoll Father Bill Woods who perished in a November 1976 plane crash. Details of his death remain unresolved.

Upcoming:



Life Beyond Borders

March 28 - 31, 2024 -- El Paso, Texas



Discern your call to global mission as a priest, brother, sister or lay missionary through an Easter Triduum encounter with Christ on today's borders.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intentions

March: For the new martyrs. We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm.

April: For the role of women. We pray that the dignity and immense value of women be recognized in every culture, and for the end of discrimination that they experience in different parts of the world.

May: For the formation of religious and seminarians. We pray that religious women and men, and seminarians, grow in their own vocations through their human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, leading them to be credible witnesses to the Gospel.

Blessed Stanley Rother, a priest of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, was martyred on July 28th, 1981, while serving the archdiocese's mission in Guatemala. The following is a brief excerpt from a talk by Doña Chona who collected the blood of Blessed Stanley Rother after he was slain.

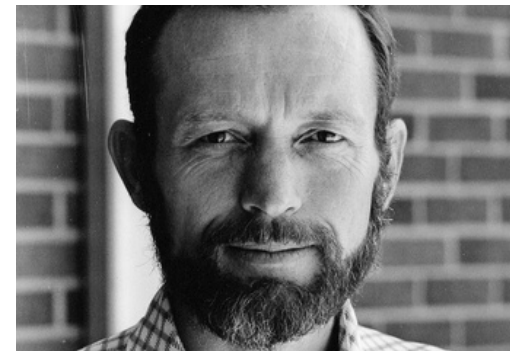


Photo credit: Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

It is said that the evening before the day Stanley Francis Rother was martyred in Guatemala in 1981, he had a plan to donate blood. Yes, he told this to his parish staff who knew that the Red Cross was taking blood donations. His intentions were to share life through sharing his blood to be saved in the blood bank of the local hospital in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala. But that same evening of July 28, 1981, at the age of 46 years old, he paid the most extreme price when a group of soldiers carrying guns came late into the night, broke into his parish and shot him dead. His blood was shed in the most ultimate sacrifice one can do!

