



SPRING 2025

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VOICES OF OUR WORLD

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Director's Greetings

The Holy Doors are Open!

On December 24th, 2024, Pope Francis opened the Holy Doors of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, officially inaugurating the Church's Jubilee year. Our Jubilee theme this year: *Hope!*

In western Christianity, the celebration of jubilee years first arose from the journey of pilgrims to Rome in 1299. They traveled long distances by foot to pray before the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. Moved by their devotion, Pope Boniface VIII declared the following year, 1300, a jubilee year dedicated to the forgiveness of sins.

Since then, the Church has typically celebrated a jubilee year roughly every 25 or 50 years with extraordinary jubilee years declared as spiritual needs arose. You may recall that Pope Francis proclaimed the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2015.

Our jubilee year concludes on December 28th, 2025, when the Pope will again close the Holy Doors. While these door remain open, we are challenged to keep our hearts open as well to the power and lessons of hope in our lives and times. As the Bull of Indiction (the papal decree) of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 proclaims, "*Spes non confundit - Hope does not disappoint.*"

Let us invoke the Spirit of God throughout this year to fill our hearts with the gift of hope. Recalling Psalm 27, "*Have hope and wait for the Lord, be strong and wait for the Lord.*" Paul explains in his Letter to the Romans (5:5), "*this hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*" Pope Francis cites the prophet Isaiah in encouraging us to lift our eyes to the horizon and see the blessings that God has in store for us.

Could it be though that we have tried a lot of things in the past and are tired of waiting? Perhaps our own discernment has left us feeling disappointed and discouraged. Have you been there? Pope Francis observes that, "*we often find that some people have lost hope, they look towards the future with skepticism and pessimism, as if nothing can offer them joy*" (*Spes non confundit*, 1). Sadly, there are young adults who believe they no longer deserve hope because they have failed Jesus.

If you're experiencing something of this despair in your own life, take heart! Give hope another look! Don't turn away from it; the door is open to you.

When you experience a crisis in your vocation, take a moment to realize that you may, in fact, be standing on a personal and spiritual threshold. A simple step bravely taken through the open door of hope can bring you into a new realm of possibility for your life. Pope Saint John Paul II exclaimed as the central message of his pontificate, "*Do not be afraid. Open, I say, open wide the doors for Christ! I plead with you - never, ever give up on hope, never doubt, never tire, and never become discouraged. Be not afraid.*" To that, I affirm to you, "Amen".

Everything that we have reflected so far should be tied up with discerning a vocation, making a decision with our lives and finally, trusting that Jesus will sustain our vocations. As we begin this jubilee year, give hope a chance. Discerning a vocation is an inner journey with an outer purpose. Your vocation in the Church can touch so many lives. What a great year to discern a vocation!

We invite you to one of two paths - missionary priesthood or missionary Brotherhood. Both begin with the same spark - that unique moment when Jesus calls each of us to say, "yes". I said "yes" and I hope you can do the same. Give Jesus a chance! If you want to know what are the initial steps to discern a vocation in Maryknoll, contact the vocation office.

Be assured of my prayers for you as we embark in this Year of Hope!

- Fr. Rodrigo



"Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do."

-Pope Saint John XXIII



Pilgrimage of Hope

*On a city street of asphalt and concrete
where last winter's ice cracks a stubborn sidewalk,
a defiant dandelion takes root and proudly
Puts forth its floral sunburst.*

*A young couple prays test results will confirm
If this time the Lord will at last bless them with new life
Even as a world away another couple awaits word
An orphaned child will soon make them a family.*



*With each interminable hour and passing day
Prisoners and hostages alike long for news
Their detainment is at an end and their
Long-awaited deliverance is at hand.*

*With aching joints and weakened legs and a heart
Broken by loss of too many loved ones over the years
An elder reverently plants a delicate sapling
under whose shade future generations will rest.*

*War-weary relatives bid a reluctant farewell
As their young flee certain death for refuge
In a land that once welcomed such as they,
Trusting in a God known for liberation.*

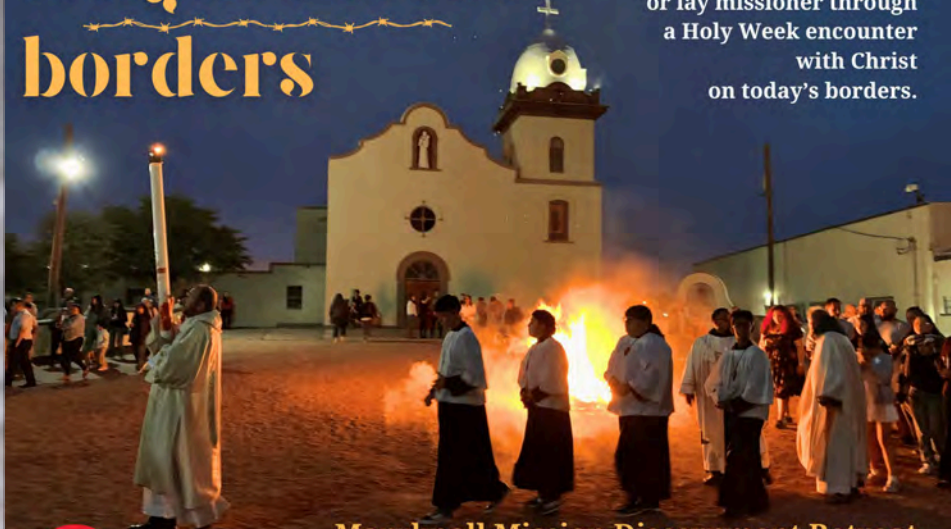
*Hope thus infuses every moment of every day
With a vision of a far, far better world
Transforming the most mundane into a holy shrine
Compelling us to take off our shoes and worship.*

By Joseph R. Veneroso, MM

Upcoming:

A light across borders

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



Maryknoll Mission Discernment Retreat
April 16 - 20, 2025 - El Paso, Texas
Contact Fr. Rodrigo at: rulloa@maryknoll.org

Come experience **REVIVAL** with us

As part of the National Eucharistic Revival, Maryknoll Society members were asked:



What does "Eucharist" mean to you as a missionary?

"After my first Holy Communion, I always felt that the Eucharist offered me a desire and drive to go out into the world to do something on Christ's behalf. Yet, in this journey of being a Maryknoll Missioner, I find more and more each moment in service of the people is an Eucharistic moment, and a moment to bring to the Mass. During the Mass, the Eucharist joins me to Christ and through Christ I feel at comfort, knowing that while I am not physically present to the communities I have served in different places (in Singapore, Hong Kong, Chicago, Bolivia, and El Paso), Christ joins us together in the sharing of his Body in a mystical union with one another."

- Deacon Matthew Sim, MM

"For me, the Eucharist is the gathering of the community of the Body of Christ to re-member, or re-live, re-enact the supper meal in which Jesus broke bread with his disciples to ritualize how he is offering his body to be broken in service to the Reign of God. When we take the bread (and cup), we commit as a community to embody (as Jesus did) the Spirit of God's love and mercy as the Body of Christ in the world, and to be "broken" (giving up our time, energy, resources, comforts, etc.) in doing so. We gather around the table to be nourished, encouraged and blessed so we in turn can nourish, encourage and bless."

- Fr. Gene Toland, MM



Voices of Our World is the quarterly vocation newsletter of the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers.

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