



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

NewsNotes

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Reflection on Solidarity with the People of Honduras

Sarah Bueter, Maryknoll Lay Missioner in El Salvador, reflects on the murder of Honduran environmental defender Juan Lopez and her recent visit to his grieving community of Tocoa as part of an emergency delegation organized by the SHARE Foundation.

It was only when I saw his photo up on the wall, a blown-up image of his dark obsidian eyes and penetrating gaze, that it fully hit me: Juan López was gone, really gone.

On September 14, Juan was shot dead as he was leaving church, eerily reminiscent of the martyrdom of Monseñor Romero, of whom Juan was an ardent devotee. At first, I couldn't believe it, but the news poured in: a prominent environmental defender was murdered in Honduras.

The SHARE Foundation organized an emergency delegation to join with Juan's family and community in the city of Tocoa in their grief and very real fear. Having known the community for several years, I joined in solidarity and in representation of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.

A group of independent UN experts on Sept. 24 described Juan's murder as "part of a series of attacks, intimidation and criminalization of human rights defenders who are members of the Municipal Committee for the Defense of Common and Public Goods (CMDBCP) and who speak about the negative consequences of the activities of the mining company Inversiones los Pinares (formerly EMCO Mining Company) in the [Carlos Escaleras] National Park and of the steel company Inversiones ECOTEK."

As coordinator of CMDBCP, Juan advocated for the protection of the Guapinol and San Pedro rivers from contamination caused by extractive activities. Since the start of a megaproject in 2015, Juan's community also has suffered from state-backed violence: violent land eviction and theft, slander campaigns, criminalization, and even the killing of family members of those who defend their land. These crimes have not been brought to justice.

The purpose of the U.S. delegation was to witness to the grief Juan's family and community endured, and to offer solidarity. We revisited places where Juan so often met us. But this time, his face was pictured on a poster and we placed candles underneath it.

In the mornings, we sat in a large circle with community members, with no agenda other than to hold space and listen. In the evenings, we joined Juan's Christian base community's nine-day prayer vigil. The large attendance blocked up the street. Voices sang out into the night while dark figures in military fatigue patrolled nearby.

We prayed for comfort for Juan's wife and two daughters.

Gratitude for his community. Forgiveness toward the intellectual authors of the crime. Justice amid impunity. Strength to continue in la lucha.

The Gospel was Matthew 5: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." I felt my heart being ripped up inside.

You see, Juan's life was rooted in love. People showed us photos: Juan wrapped in the arms of family, Juan sharing cake at a first communion party, Juan speaking at a town-hall meeting. People shared with us his public speeches, homilies, and canticles that celebrated the beauty of creation. Juan worked against death, but even more so, he worked for life.

"Love for life is written into human DNA," Juan wrote. "It is the most beautiful thing and it is worth living for."

We believe this as Maryknoll missioners. We bind together with those who work on behalf of peace, social justice, and the integrity of creation.

In Maryknoll, we most commonly express love through our mission work. But, as Pope Francis writes, "Love, overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civic and political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world" (Laudato Si, 231). We, like Juan López, express our love in the civic and political world.

Extractive industries are a global reality and threat. Where I live in El Salvador as a lay missioner, people living in poverty who defend their territory against abuse by extractive activities often are met with repression. Projects by extractive companies in places where there is weak rule of law, impunity, and corruption often trigger or escalate violence. Many mining companies in Latin America are subsidiaries of U.S. and Canadian companies that benefit from policies that maintain the underlying conditions that foment violence and impunity.

Even still, steeped in grief and fear, Juan's community pledges to continue to defend its rivers, its land, its life. "Juan is not dead," the community chanted, "He is multiplied in us." Juan's spirit lives on in the community. And the community needs me, needs us all, just as we need this community to teach us what "love for life" looks like. It looks like this. It is written into human DNA. "It is the most beautiful thing, and it is worth living for." §

Honduras: Climate Leaders Under Threat

The murder of Juan Lopez, environmental leader in Tocoa, Honduras, is not an isolated incidence, but rather, one more link in a pattern of violence.

The assassination of Juan López on Saturday, September 15, as he left his church has left the network of environmentalists in Honduras in shock and grief, but perhaps not in surprise.

Juan was a member of the Municipal Committee in Defence of Common and Public Goods of Tocoa (Comité Municipal de Defensa de los Bienes Comunes y Públicos de Tocoa -CMDBCP), a committee formed in 2015 to organize against concessions to an iron ore mining project in the Carlos Escaleras National Park because of the risks the mine posed to rivers and watersheds. The mining concessions were granted to Los Pinares mining company, owned by some of the most powerful families in Honduras.

Juan Lopez's organization CMDBCP, was awarded the Institute for Policy Studies' Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award in 2019, and Juan Lopez was among the delegation that came to Washington, DC, to receive the award. In his speech, he quoted his compatriot, fellow Honduran and environmental activist Berta Caceres, who was assassinated in 2016.

The CMDBCP had been put on high alert of the dangers its members faced from numerous death threats. In recent months, Juan reported being followed by two men on motorcycles and receiving numerous threats from a local businessperson and a representative of the mining company. The Inter-American Human Rights Commission granted urgent requests of protective measures to Juan Lopez and 29 other activists in the community as early as October of 2023. In fact, Juan Lopez's assassination marks the fourth murder of a member of the CMDBCP since 2023.

While the details of the case of CMDBCP are particularly concerning, egregious threats against the lives of environmentalists are endemic to the entire region. Central America and Colombia remained the most dangerous places in the world for environmental activists, as seen from the per capita assassination rate documented by Global Witness for the year 2023. Honduras had the ignominious distinction of being the second most dangerous country for environmentalists that year.

Furthermore, Central America, including Honduras, is known as a biological hyperdiversity hotspot, containing 5-12 percent of the world's total biodiversity. The most dangerous country for environmentalists, Colombia, which saw 79 assassinations in the year 2023,

holds ten percent of the Amazon rainforest, the most biodiverse ecosystem on the planet. And yet, Honduras is highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, flooding, hurricanes, and landslides, which are exacerbated by climate change. These regions are irreplaceable and deserving of fierce protection.

Assassinations are only the most concrete evidence of violence towards green activists, and there is no way to quantify the chilling effect that these murders have for those who would stand up for their ecology otherwise. The larger damage of the violence towards environmental groups is immeasurable.

In a new report by the Institute for Policy Studies, descriptively titled "The Corporate Assault on Honduras: Mafia-style investments and the Honduran people's struggle for democracy and dignity," tells of some of the factors contributing to Honduras' uncertainty. Honduras was the second most sued country in all of Latin America after Mexico in cases of international arbitration claims, based on "irregular" investments made after the 2009 coup de état. The claimants in these suits, in many instances, are investors who have had direct or indirect links to criminal networks. As the report summarizes, "the cost to the country is not only economic but also social and political, given that the suits aim to have a 'deterrent effect' on regulations and public policies."

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns joined a statement, alongside 19 other human rights and faith-based organizations, on the death of Juan Lopez. The statement reads:

"We urge an immediate investigation into his assassination so that the perpetrators are brought to justice, including those who ordered the killing. We call on the ["Libre" political party-controlled government] to strengthen its protective measures for environmentalists and activists and for [Honduran] President Xiomara Castro to keep her campaign promise to end open-pit mining in the country."

The statement concludes, "the time to change course is now." §

Faith in action: Read the report by the Institute for Policy Studies, "The Corporate Assault on Honduras: Mafia-style investments and the Honduran people's struggle for democracy and dignity" at <https://mogc.info/IPS-Honduras>

Tanzania: Will Elections Be Peaceful?

The abductions and murders of political opposition leaders in recent months raise questions of how peaceful and fair elections will be on November 28 and in October of 2025.

On September 6, Ali Mohammed Kibao, a leading member of the Party for Democracy and Progress (Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo, CHADEMA), was snatched off a bus on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam. Several hours later his dead body was found in bushes with his face disfigured by acid.

This incident followed several other murders and abductions of opposition party members and resulted in the United States and several European countries calling for thorough investigations into these deaths. President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the ruling CCM Party objected to “outsiders” intervening in Tanzania’s domestic matters and said that the government is capable of conducting the investigations itself.

Freeman Mbowe, the presidential candidate for CHADEMA, called for Scotland Yard to lead the investigations of these incidents, stating that they did not trust Tanzanian law enforcement to conduct a “proper and transparent” inquiry. The party organized peaceful protests to take place in Dar es Salaam on September 23, but earlier that morning the police detained Mbowe and Tundu Lissu, CHADEMA’s deputy, plus twelve other party leaders. They had also been briefly detained back in August and in 2017 Lissu had been the target of an assassination attempt.

After what was viewed as the increasingly authoritarian presidency of John Magufuli, Samia Suluhu Hassan declared in 2021 that, under her presidency, the government would defend democracy and not tolerate brutality. But recent events raise fears that the Suluhu government is reverting to Magufuli’s repressive tactics, threatening the peace and fairness of local elections on Nov. 28 and the presidential election in 2025.

Despite assertions that it defends democracy, the Tanzanian government on October 3 suspended Mwananchi Communications Limited (MCL), publisher of several popular print and digital news publications in Tanzania, for thirty days for what it alleged to be prohibited content. Two days earlier, MCL, published an animated explanation of the abductions and deaths of members of the opposition party, an action the government said would bring “ridicule to and harm the reputation of the Republic of Tanzania.”

Tanzania’s ruling party, Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), Swahili for Revolutionary Party, is the successor to the Tanzania African National Union (TANU), the independence party of 1961. In 1992, Tanzania transitioned to multi-party democracy and subsequently several opposition parties

ran against CCM, but with limited success. However, there has been a steady increase in the number of opposition candidates elected to Parliament, from 23% in 1995 to 30% in 2015. CHADEMA originated in 2005, but gained only 6% of the presidential vote, which grew to 40% in the 2015 election.

In 2020, President Magufuli, running for re-election, became alarmed over CHADEMA’s political strength and Mbowe’s popularity, and the elections that year were referred to as the most rigged and violent Tanzania ever experienced. Beginning in June of 2016, Magufuli banned opposition rallies and restricted public funding for opposition parties. Tundu Lissu had his vehicle sprayed with bullets; Mbowe was arrested and his business destroyed. After Suluhu became president in 2021, she had Mbowe detained for eight months.

Mbowe has proven to be an effective organizer of the CHADEMA political party and has built it up to be the only opposition party in what is now a de facto two-party state.



Photo of President Samia Suluhu Hassan in Pretoria by GCIS

After the 2005 election, Mbowe focused on making party operations effective and used helicopters to travel to far-flung parts of the country. By 2010 CHADEMA had a country-wide presence and, by running on an anti-corruption platform, both the party and Mbowe greatly improved their popularity.

Another method Mbowe used to build the CHADEMA party was “walking rallies” where opposition leaders address the public as they walk together through a community since the Magufuli government had banned opposition rallies.

Mbowe’s careful, pragmatic approach to politics and his huge national popularity have made the CCM party concerned about losing future elections. It remains to be seen whether the elections in November and next year will be peaceful. §

Afghanistan Three Years into Taliban Rule

Iqbal Ahmad, Kroc Institute Fellow, writes of how Afghanistan, three years since the Taliban's takeover, has devolved into one of the most repressive regimes in the world, resulting in severe hardship and a third generation of Afghan refugees.

More than two decades after the overthrow of the oppressive Taliban regime, Afghanistan found itself thrust back into darkness in August 2021, when the group regained control. This stark reversal marks a heartbreaking chapter in the country's ongoing struggle for freedom and development. Citizens, once filled with hope for a brighter future, now grapple with severe restrictions and an uncertain existence, facing some of the most daunting challenges imaginable. In this landscape of despair, the resilience of the Afghan people is constantly tested as they navigate the harsh realities of life under renewed oppression.

The year 2001 marked a pivotal moment for Afghanistan, igniting a spark of hope as the nation began its journey toward rebuilding a prosperous future grounded in democratic values and bolstered by international support. Over the past two decades, despite facing numerous challenges—including a fragile institutional framework and ongoing conflict, the country made notable strides in education and civil rights. These advancements fostered a growing sense of empowerment among citizens, especially women and youth, who began to envision a brighter future.

However, this progress faced a significant setback in 2021 when the peace process collapsed, and the Taliban regained control. This unexpected shift cast a shadow over the achievements of the previous two decades, leaving many to fear for the future. Hopes for a stable and democratic society quickly faded as the reality of renewed oppression set in. Citizens confronted a regime intent on rolling back their hard-won rights and freedoms. As the world watched, concerns about the nation's path forward deepened, raising urgent questions about its future amidst such uncertainty.

Three years since the Taliban's takeover, Afghanistan has devolved into one of the most repressive regimes globally, characterized by a stark regression in human rights, particularly for women. The Taliban's complete ban on secondary education for girls stands as a chilling hallmark of their oppressive rule, effectively restraining the hopes and futures of an entire generation.

Meanwhile, the media, which once served as a vital channel for information and public discourse, is now heavily monitored and censored, leaving little room for dissent or critical thought. Civil society has been dismantled, with any attempts at activism or independent thought met with brutal reprisals, creating an atmosphere of fear and silence that pervades daily life. In this environment, the promise of a more progressive and inclusive Afghanistan remains a

distant memory, overshadowed by a regime that thrives on oppression and control.

The ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, fueled by political instability and the recent government upheaval, has plunged the population into severe oppression and economic hardship, resulting in a staggering refugee crisis. As reported by the UN, nearly 10.9 million Afghans remain displaced due to over four decades of conflict, making Afghanistan the third-largest displaced population globally, following Syria and Ukraine.

This mass displacement encompasses both those internally displaced within the country and those seeking refuge abroad, most recently escaping the dire realities of life under the Taliban. The humanitarian impact is profound, with families torn apart, communities shattered, and countless individuals facing uncertain futures in foreign lands.

Despite the Taliban's assurances of amnesty following their takeover, the reality on the ground is unpredictable and starkly different from their promises. Many former government officials have been executed or forcibly disappeared in the wake of the Taliban's return to power, particularly after the collapse of the peace process.

Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch, noted, "The Taliban leadership's promised amnesty has not prevented local commanders from summarily executing or disappearing former Afghan security force members." Consequently, a significant number of Afghans have fled to neighboring countries and beyond, seeking safety amid an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear.

Afghanistan's journey from hope to despair is a sharp reminder of the fragility of progress in the face of tyranny. The past two decades offered glimpses of a brighter future, marked by advancements in education, civil rights, and democratic values. However, the Taliban's resurgence has shattered those aspirations, plunging the nation into renewed oppression and economic turmoil.

The widespread displacement of millions underscores the profound humanitarian crisis that continues to unfold. Yet, without meaningful support and advocacy, the dreams of a free and prosperous Afghanistan may remain out of reach, lost in the shadows of oppression. The urgent need for global attention and action has never been more critical to safeguard the rights and futures of the Afghan people. §

Faith in action: Write to Congress in support of the Fulfilling Promises to Afghan Allies Act at <https://mogc.info/FPAAA>

Climate Week in NYC Says It's Time

Sara Kennel, climate action intern, represented the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns at Climate Week NYC 2024 from September 22-29.

Climate Group, an international non-profit focused on driving climate action, organized the annual event—Climate Week NYC—again this year, on September 22-29. Climate Group and the United Nations coordinate the event in New York City to take place at the same time as the UN General Assembly, allowing heads of state and other senior government officials to participate.

The theme for Climate Week NYC 2024 was “It’s Time,” underscoring the dire need for climate action. Community activists, business leaders, political figures, organizations, Indigenous peoples, and local communities participated in over 900 activities in New York City to address the urgency of this moment.

Climate Group charts a path for a course correction on climate change with a “Global To-Do” list composed of seven ambitious actions: supporting workers to power down coal, unleashing renewables, banning the relining of coal-based steel furnaces, getting serious about methane, buying clean energy, paying attention to energy efficiency, and taxing fossil fuels to fund the transition to renewable energy.

While the to-dos are necessary to tackle climate change, they often lack actionable plans. Furthermore, the voices of Indigenous people and local communities are absent from this list.

Indigenous people and local communities are among the most impacted by the effects of climate change. Climate Week NYC included numerous events organized by Indigenous groups and allies that highlighted the role of Indigenous wisdom in addressing pressing issues. While the ambitious Global To-Do List outlined changes in infrastructure, the speakers from various Indigenous groups spoke of a change in framework. To address climate change, they said, we need to view our relationship with nature in a fundamentally different way and acknowledge our resource exploitation.

In the panel discussion “Wellbeing Through Climate Adaptation,” Walter Rodriguez Meyer, a professor at Stanford University, spoke on how our relationship with nature is restored in Indigenous thought. By Indigenous wisdom, we are inseparable from nature, he said, and so nature must be inseparable from the world we hope to construct. It is not us against Mother Earth, it is a coalition of care.

In the “Educating for Climate Action Summit,” the keynote speaker Tecumseh Caesar highlighted the importance of employing sustainable strategies while viewing animals as relatives. We cannot decide alone how to rebalance an

ecosystem and protect its life; we must know how its animals live and the responsibilities they hold. Otherwise, we will only ever discover new ways to dominate an earth made for coexistence. The remarks echo what Pope Francis wrote in his encyclical letter, *Laudato Si'*, describing the bond between humans and God’s creatures as “Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother River, and Mother Earth.” referencing the *Canticle of Saint Francis* for which *Laudato Si'* was named.

The Jean Charles Choctaw Nation in Louisiana sent representatives from their tribe, Chief Démé Naquin and Tribal Executive Secretary Chantel Comardelle, to speak about their experience with climate displacement. Sitting in a Columbia University classroom, they wove their story for a captive audience. Their tribe lived on the Isle de Jean Charles, their land of refuge after the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The island, initially a source of protection for their people, progressively eroded beneath them, carrying with it their cultural heritage and tradition. Rising sea levels and severe storms have contributed to large portions of the land disappearing.

Before the federal government awarded the state nearly \$50 million in 2016 to resettle the tribe to higher ground, the children struggled to get to school as the connecting road, surrounded by water, often flooded. Chantel said, “It breaks my heart to watch something that has always been a staple in our lives, slowly decay without being able to do anything about it...we still have lots of culture and identity there.”

The community has suffered and continues to suffer injustices. A levy system that was built to mitigate storm damage did not take the island into consideration, leaving it defenseless. Once relocated, their community was fractured and lacked funding to build new homes. In all of this, they emphasized the lack of awareness of affected communities and stressed the importance of their voice. Chantel said, “This is an issue much larger than us. It’s about everyone having their basic human rights...marginalized communities are on the frontlines of the worst climate conditions, and if we support others in crisis, they can support us when we need it.”

When climate-affected communities tell their stories, they teach us climate resilience. Climate Week provided a space for the sharing of wisdom and stories we need to face the present moment as well as the future. Compassion begins here, standing in solidarity for the health of our common home. §

Colombia Hosts the 16th UN Biodiversity Conference

Hosting a record-breaking 23,000 attendees, the conference was filled with representatives seeking solutions. While we await the outcome, we review what is at stake.

Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity descended on Cali, Colombia, from October 21 to November 1 to work towards international partnership on preserving biodiversity. While we do not yet have the conference outcome, the stakes of the conference are clear. The rich diversity of creation is at risk. The exploitation of natural resources, overconsumption, land-use changes, and environmental pollution harm the biodiverse ecosystems we are meant to steward.

Since 1970, we have seen a 69% decrease in global wildlife populations, a reality that will lead to the threat of extinction for one million species within the next few decades if nothing is done. Indigenous people have been the best stewards of biodiversity, and over 80% of the remaining biodiversity is on their lands. Yet, hostility from extractive companies and conservation efforts to displace people threaten the symbiotic relationship between these people and their land.

During the previous biodiversity conference, progress was made with the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Diversity Framework (KMGBF) that introduced The Biodiversity Plan, conserving 30% of the earth's land and water, restoring 30% of degraded ecosystems, and decreasing the introduction of invasive species by 50%, all by 2030. This conference this year seeks to take concrete steps towards the implementation of these goals.

The theme for this year's biodiversity conference is "Peace with Nature," and delegations from over 190 countries convened in Colombia to discuss the necessity of a unified global response to biodiversity loss. This convention grew out of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which called upon the world to address, halt, and reverse the global loss of biodiversity.

Colombia, one of the most biodiverse countries on the planet is home to 54,000 recognized species. Indigenous peoples, an important voice in the conversation, largely protect the country's Amazon rainforest. While the Colombian government pushes an ambitious climate plan to phase out fossil fuels, transition to clean energy, and end national deforestation by 2030, controversy has arisen over its neglect of protecting environmental defenders. Colombia had the highest number of assassinations of environmental activists in the world in 2023, as documented by Global Witness, with organized crime believed to be responsible for around half of those.

Hosting a record-breaking 23,000 attendees, the biodiversity conference was filled with representatives seeking solutions. Official delegations from countries who are parties to the Convention were expected to present plans of action to achieve the 30x30 goals outlined in the KMGBF. The U.S. is not a party to the Convention. Efforts have been made by most U.S. presidents since 1992 to join, but international treaties require a two-thirds Senate majority, which has not been achieved.

Others attending included Indigenous representatives of communities across the globe who voiced their concerns, sharing insights and knowledge from their relationship with biodiverse lands. Accredited observers were invited to the conference, representing faith organizations, civil society, activists, students, politicians, and Maryknoll missionaries.

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns hosted a side event, "Strengthening Indigenous and Local Community Partnerships" featuring Maasai pastoralists from Tanzania and community leaders from the Colombian Amazon. Maryknoll representatives to the UN and other members of faith communities advocated for the following outcomes to be generated by the UN Biodiversity Conference:

- The protection of environmental defenders advocating for land and water protection, focusing on advocates in Latin America threatened with significant violence.
- The assurance of leadership from Indigenous and local communities in biodiversity conservation. Eighty percent of the remaining biodiversity on the planet is on their traditional lands making it imperative to respect and protect both their right to stay on their land and to assume leadership in its protection.
- The ambitious implementation of the Kunming Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) that aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. Priority should be given to submissions of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.
- To address biodiversity loss and climate change at the same time, with combined efforts to restore biodiverse ecosystems while mitigating the effects of climate change, integrating policies at national and international levels.
- To ensure adequate funding for biodiversity conservation, expanding access to resources, and advocating for increased financing from developed countries, including \$20 billion from the U.S. by 2025. §

Global Debt Crisis Needs Jubilee

Pope Francis and leaders from the Global South call for a new international financial architecture that breaks the cycle forcing many countries to spend more on debt repayments and interest than on caring for people and the planet.

A quarter of a century ago, the “Jubilee 2000” campaign led to the cancellation of more than \$100 billion in debt owed by 35 of the world’s poorest countries. Twenty-five years later, global public debt keeps rising, forcing many lower-income countries to spend more on debt repayments than on climate, health, and education priorities.

The German Catholic Bishops Conference’s Global Sovereign Debt Monitor reveals that, in 2024, countries in the Global South will have to make more debt service payments to their external creditors than ever before. In 130 of the 152 countries surveyed in the Global South, 55% are critically or very critically indebted, in contrast to only 37% before the covid-19 pandemic.

More than one billion U.S. dollars a day are needed for debt service payments. According to the UN report titled “A World of Debt,” more than 3.3 billion people — almost half of the world’s population — live in countries that spend more on debt service than on education or healthcare. The UN Secretary-General calls this downward spiral a “systemic failure” of the global community.

Heavily indebted countries are often compelled to export extensively because earning a foreign trade surplus is the only way to obtain the hard currency required for debt repayments. This often forces countries to take drastic measures: they restrict their citizens’ consumption, neglect sustainable development and labor rights, and harm the environment. These connections highlight that the global debt crisis is a major cause of famines and a significant reason for the world’s failure to achieve the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

No lasting solution to the debt crisis has emerged. Existing debt workout mechanisms are inadequate and heavily influenced by the interests of creditors.

In response to debt crises, many countries must adopt extensive austerity measures – partly because creditors are rarely willing to cancel their claims. This often means deep cuts to basic social services.

In Sri Lanka, for example, the steep rise in food and energy prices severely impacts people’s daily lives. At the same time, social benefits are reduced, with access to free education and universal healthcare increasingly restricted. As a result, malnutrition, school dropouts, and youth unemployment are all increasing.

The situation in sub-Saharan Africa is particularly problematic: The Global Sovereign Debt Monitor 2024 finds that 67% of sub-Saharan African countries belong to the group of critically or very critically indebted countries. One of the reasons for this is that in 2022, the economy in sub-Saharan Africa grew much more slowly than other regions of the Global South. Although public debt is growing in all regions, only in Africa it is growing faster than GDP.

Heavily indebted countries like Sri Lanka, Malawi, Zambia, and Ghana need the fiscal leeway necessary for pursuing development and transforming into sustainable societies. This means addressing the climate crisis must take center stage — something only debt relief can allow.

A major challenge remains to unite all stakeholders and creditors to negotiate adequate debt relief. Unfortunately, the creditor landscape is more complex than it was 25 years ago.

Most claims against the Global South now are held by private creditors, including many hedge funds licensed in the state of New York and in the UK, followed by the World Bank and IMF. However, official bilateral creditors such as the United States and EU nations also are important. They can work to ensure fair debt relief. They especially have political sway over private and multilateral creditors: 70% of claims against the Global South are held by entities in the EU and G7 nations.

Pope Francis announced 2025 to be a Jubilee year in the Catholic church, a year of forgiveness, reconciliation, and hope that occurs every 25 years. The vision of Jubilee is most fully explained in the Book of Leviticus (25: 1-55) as a time to cancel debts, restore community, and establish freedom from debt bondage.

The Jubilee 2025 vision includes principles of Catholic Social Teaching such as upholding life and the dignity of the person, care for the common good, preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, and care for creation.

Jubilee 2025 also puts to right the three principles of justice that are violated by the debt crisis: fairness in all agreements, allocation of income and wealth in light of those with unmet needs, and participation of all in society. §

Faith in action: Join the Jubilee USA Network to connect with Catholics around the world for Jubilee actions in 2025. <https://www.jubileeusa.org/>

Charges Dropped Against Christians for Ceasefire Members

On March 21, Art Laffin and Kathy Boylan of the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker in Washington, DC, were arrested alongside eleven other members of Christians for Ceasefire while wearing pictures of the destruction in Gaza and singing hymns of peace in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office building. While most of the group paid a fine and were released, Laffin and Boylan opted to stand trial, which was postponed twice before charges were dismissed. Laffin offers the following reflection on the experience.

Yesterday, October 10, a notice was sent to our lawyers, Mark Goldstone and Frank Panapoulos, from Assistant Attorney General John Roberts of the District of Columbia, stating that the charges against Kathy and me are dismissed.

Kathy and I are deeply grateful to Mark (and his interns) and Frank for all their help in this case, and for Josh Paul and Philip Farah's willingness to testify on our behalf at trial. [Josh Paul resigned from the State Department in October 2023 due to his disagreement with the Biden administration's decision to rush lethal military assistance to Israel in the context of its war on Gaza. Philip Farah is a Palestinian Christian from East Jerusalem, now living in the Washington, DC area, and co-founder of Palestinian Christians for Peace.]

We are also thankful for everyone who came to court to offer their prayerful support, as well as those who were not able to be at court and who expressed their prayerful solidarity.

On March 21, the date of the Christians 4 Ceasefire witness, the official Palestinian death toll in Gaza was over 32,000. Additionally, relief agencies reported that a vast majority of Gazans faced famine conditions due to lack of food and Israel's prevention of crucial humanitarian aid shipments.

According to the Gaza Health Ministry, as of the first week of October, an estimated 42,000 people have died in Gaza, including 17,000 children, and over 100,000 have been injured as a direct result of Israeli bombing and siege. Nearly 2 million Palestinians have been displaced. As Israel has blocked critical food and aid, Gazans are experiencing famine conditions. Cases of polio have been reported. Most of Gaza is virtually uninhabitable.

Just think, over 10,000 Palestinians have been killed since our March 21 witness. On March 21, the 13 of us who were arrested in the Russell Senate Rotunda were in fact engaging in an act of crime prevention. We should never have been arrested for this nonviolent witness.

If the U.S. Senate would have listened to our prayerful plea and that of so many more across the U.S. and called for a permanent ceasefire on the day of our pray-in, and

authorized an arms embargo on Israel in accordance with the Leahy Law, over 10,000 lives could have been saved.

Israel's war on Gaza continues without release of hostages and has expanded into Lebanon. Settler violence and Israeli military attacks have increased in the West Bank. And the Israeli government, with U.S. backing, is now threatening to attack Iran.

Meanwhile, the Japanese group Nihon Hidankyo, a grassroots organization of atomic bomb survivors (known as Hibakusha) from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have received the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize. After the prize was announced, the co-chair of Nihon Hidankyo, Toshiyuki Mimaki, spoke to reporters in Tokyo and said, "In Gaza, bleeding children are being held [by their parents]. It's like in Japan 80 years ago."

I conclude with a portion of a Prayer of Lament that was offered last Friday, Oct. 4, outside the White House, during a prayer service for peace in Gaza and the Middle East to mark the feast day of St. Francis:

For our nation's role in the deaths of more than 42,000 Palestinians, including more than 17,000 children, each one of them a precious and irreplaceable life. Our leaders knowingly sent to Israel the weapons that killed them. For this we repent.

God forgive the wrong we've done; God, forgive us now.

For our nation's failure to advance a permanent ceasefire and to prioritize the release of Israeli hostages as well as Palestinians unjustly detained; for our failure to promote diplomacy toward a just and lasting peace for both Palestinians and Israelis, we repent.

God forgive the wrong we've done; God forgive us now.

We stand with all Jewish, Christian and Muslim brothers and sisters who are working to end U.S. complicity in Israel's war on Gaza and to help bring about a ceasefire and just peace for Palestine and Israel. Now more than ever we need to proclaim the Gospel of Nonviolence! §

Atomic Bomb Survivors Awarded Nobel Peace Prize

The Nobel Committee's recognition of the Japanese hibakusha organization Nihon Hidankyo comes at a crucial moment for addressing the nuclear threat.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee announced on October 11 that it has awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2024 to the Japanese organization Nihon Hidankyo. The committee stated, "This grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, also known as Hibakusha, is receiving the Peace Prize for its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again."

In a press release from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), Nobel Laureate 2017, Executive Director Melissa Parke said, "It is extremely important that the hibakusha have been recognized for their lifelong work to bring the world's attention to what nuclear weapons actually do to people when they are used. It is particularly significant that this award comes at this time when the risk that nuclear weapons will be used again is as high, if not higher, as it has ever been.

"Their testimonies and tireless campaigning have been crucial to progress on nuclear disarmament in general and

the adoption and entry into force of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in particular. We call on the nuclear-armed states and their allies which support the use of nuclear weapons, including of course Japan, to heed their call to abolish these inhumane weapons to make sure what they have been through never happens again."

The recognition of the hibakusha comes at a crucial moment. Next year marks 80 years since the atomic bombing of Japan. Meanwhile, New START, the sole remaining nuclear arms control treaty between nuclear superpowers the United States and Russia, is set to expire on February 6, 2026. MOGC will launch a yearlong campaign on January 22, 2025, the fourth anniversary of the entry into force of the TPNW, to increase awareness and solidarity around nuclear disarmament, and pressure the U.S. and Russia to commit to a new arms control framework. §

Faith in action: Get involved in Back from the Brink to advocate for nuclear risk reduction and disarmament in your community. <https://preventnuclearwar.org/>

Haiti Advocacy Days and Renewal of Sanctions

More than 40 organizations working for peace and justice in Haiti came to Washington, DC for Haiti Advocacy Days on September 25-26 to meet with members of Congress and their staff about the urgent crisis of illegal guns and ammunition flowing from the United States to gangs in Haiti.

Maryknoll lay missionary Sami Scott, recently evacuated from Haiti, joined the broad coalition of faith leaders and their partners who met with 15 Senate offices and delivered their letter of concern and call to action to additional congressional offices. At the heart of their message was the human face of Haiti's descent into chaos and lawlessness under the rule of armed gangs. Sami described the tightening grip of heavily armed gangs on communities as "unrelenting terror" that has made all forms of work, schooling, and daily activities nearly impossible for the Haitian people.

The presence of the Kenya-led Multinational Security Support (MSS) in Haiti since June has made little impact in public safety. The Head of the UN Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) María Isabel Salvador reported 1,441 murders from June to August, a 40% increase during the same period in 2023. The UN Secretary General has described Haiti's situation as "one of the most disastrous humanitarian

situations in the whole world." Recently Kenya's President Ruto promised to send 600 more troops to Haiti in November 2024.

The U.S. had proposed transforming the MSS into a UN Peacemaking Mission, but they subsequently dropped it in September. Many countries, including China and Russia, had expressed their distaste for a UN Peacekeeping Mission. Nonetheless, the UN renewed the MSS mandate for a year.

The rationale for wanting to transform it into a UN Mission was to ensure stable funding from member states. Currently, MSS is funded by the United States and Canada. Leslie Voltaire, the current rotating president of Haiti's Transition Presidential Council sent a letter to the UN Secretary General asking that the MSS be transformed to a UN Mission.

In October 2022, the UN passed a one-year regime of sanctions comprised of targeted assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo. The sanctions have been renewed by the UN Sanctions Committee which expanded the arms embargo from targeted measures applying to designated people to include a territorial embargo covering the entire country. §

Human Rights Award for Activists in Gaza and Guatemala

The 2024 Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Awards were given to Rabbis for Ceasefire and the Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU), and the Concejo de Autoridades de 48 Cantones de Totonicapán of Guatemala; and a slain former awardee was honored.

The Institute for Policy Studies held their annual Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Awards ceremony in Washington, DC, on October 10. Each year, IPS honors both a domestic and international awardee.

This year's domestic awardees are the Institute for Middle East Understanding, for their work "providing journalists with quick, reliable access to information about Palestinians by Palestinians," and Rabbis for Ceasefire, "an ad-hoc group of Rabbis across denominations, organizing towards a ceasefire in Gaza and a just peace in Israel-Palestine."

The international awardee is the 48 Cantones, ancestral community authorities of 48 groups of Maya K'iche' people defending democracy and increasing access to opportunities for Indigenous peoples in Guatemala.

In addition to honoring this year's awardees, the ceremony included a tribute to Honduran environmental defender Juan Lopez, a 2019 Letelier-Moffitt awardee who was murdered in Honduras on September 14. (See accompanying article in this issue of NewsNotes.)

IPS established the Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Awards in 1976 to honor their fallen colleagues, Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, who were assassinated that year in Washington, DC, by the US-backed regime of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet for their work to defend democracy and human rights in Chile. Today, IPS says, "these awards celebrate new champions of human rights and memorialize the victims of the Pinochet dictatorship."

The Maryknoll Sisters received the award in 1981, and Maryknoll Sister Pat Ryan received the award on behalf of Derechos Humanos y Medio Ambiente (DHUMA) in Puno, Peru in 2018.

The 2024 international award was presented via video by Guatemalan-American U.S. Congresswoman Delia Ramirez of Illinois. Referring to the popular struggles leading to and surrounding the 2023 presidential elections in Guatemala, Rep. Ramirez said, "The powerful movement catalyzed by the 48 Canones is an example of how peaceful protest, community decision-making, rooted in Indigenous traditions, and coalition-building between Guatemala's historically excluded populations was the force that stopped the attempts to silence the democratic will of the Guatemalan people."

Orlando Castro, one of three members of the 48

Cantones receiving the award on their behalf, noted that the 48 Cantones had been joined by a number of other Maya K'iche and other Indigenous groups. He also thanked migrants who have had to leave Guatemala in search of economic opportunities. "They have also lifted up their voices to say, 'Enough of so much corruption!' They also supported us." He concluded, "The path of ancestral community service is the path by which we can all find one another, sustain one another, and help one another. May everyone rise up, and nobody be left behind."

Phyllis Bennis and Khury Petersen-Smith of IPS presented the domestic awards. Petersen-Smith commented on the "overwhelming" violence on and since October 7, 2023, but also noted a profound breakthrough in awareness and mobilization on the issues of Palestinian rights in the United States, attributing this to both Jewish groups pushing back on the use of Jewish identity to justify violence, and Palestinian groups telling their own stories. Bennis recounted how IMEU has worked with Palestinians in the Middle East and the United States and with the U.S. press to amplify stories of Palestinians, and of how Rabbis for Ceasefire quickly emerged in the face of the war in Gaza, to become a prominent mobilizing force bringing Jewish demands for peace to the attention of political leaders.

Dana Kardoush of IMEU expressed gratitude at receiving the award alongside Rabbis for Ceasefire, saying, "So many people think and want to believe that there is a conflict between Palestinians and Jews, when we know how untrue it is. The dividing line is between people who support and promote ethnic or racial supremacy and those who believe in freedom for all people with no exceptions."

Faced with a failure thus far to end the war in Gaza, Rabbis for Ceasefire founder Rabbi Alissa Wise called on people of faith to return to sacred scripture for ethical direction, saying, "The way (we) are choosing to engage with Jewish tradition is to mine it for imperatives to solidarity and mutual aid; to nourishing where we live, not dominating it; to live interdependently with our neighbors; to choose collective liberation. We will keep at it as long as it takes." §

Faith in action: Write to your members of Congress urging a ceasefire and for an end to U.S. weapons transfers to Israel. <https://mogc.info/ceasefirenow>

Nonviolence Seminars for Synod Participants

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative's new institute held weekly seminars in Rome throughout the second assembly of the Synod on Synodality.

Pax Christi International's Catholic Nonviolence Initiative (CNI) launched a new project on September 29 in Rome: the Catholic Institute for Nonviolence. The institute's mission is to make nonviolence research, resources and experience, more accessible to Catholic Church leaders, communities and institutions in order to deepen Catholic understanding of and commitment to the practice of Gospel nonviolence. It will work mainly as a virtual institute but with a small presence in Rome.

The launch event included a panel of Catholic experts on nonviolence, followed by the presentation of the 2023 Pax Christi Peace Award to the Parents Forum – Family Circle, an Israeli-Palestinian organization of more than 700 families who have lost immediate family members in the ongoing conflict. Their faithful work and vision for peace for the region offer a practical expression of nonviolence in action.

The launch was soon followed by a series of four seminars, titled *The Power of Active Nonviolence: Transforming the Church, Changing the World*, offered for participants in the Synod on Synodality in Rome. The report from the first assembly of the Synod in 2023 named several themes for further exploration by the church, including calling for “more reflection and formation in order that we can manage conflicts in a nonviolent way” and “careful consideration of nonviolence and legitimate self-defence.” Pax Christi has fostered deep exploration of these questions in the intervening year, and the seminars offered a variety of important insights and perspectives.

The inaugural seminar on October 4, *Nonviolence: Faithful & Effective*, centered on integrating nonviolent principles within the framework of faith and their practical implications. Theologians, scholars, and practitioners examined the centrality of nonviolence to the Catholic faith, its potential as a powerful strategy for ending violence and fostering peace, and the significant role the Church can play in promoting nonviolence globally. The discussions underscored the urgent need for a cultural shift toward active nonviolence and emphasized the Church's capacity to contribute to this movement worldwide.

On October 11, the second seminar, *Managing Conflict Nonviolently*, focused on the practical application of nonviolent strategies to address conflicts within communities and beyond. The seminar highlighted real-life stories of grassroots peacemaking and emphasized how nonviolence can be a powerful tool for fostering respect, honesty, and justice in relationships. Panelists covered different

nonviolent strategies to address violence, citing experiences in Mexico, Guatemala, and northern Kenya.

The third seminar, on October 18, titled “Nonviolent Defence: Beyond War and Cycles of Violence,” highlighted the centrality of nonviolence to the Gospel and its effectiveness in legitimate defense. The event brought together global experts to discuss how investment in nonviolent research and training can offer effective alternatives to traditional forms of conflict resolution.

The final seminar on October 25, “The Role of the Church in Nurturing a Global Nonviolent Shift,” discussed the Church's duty to foster a cultural shift by integrating nonviolent practices into education, training, and evangelization.

Experts including academics and peacebuilding practitioners from around the world presented at the seminars. Attendees included Vatican officials from various dicasteries, diplomats, cardinals and other prelates, religious community members, representatives of Catholic organizations, and several members of the institute's Advisory Council.

Marie Dennis, CNI's Senior Director, was in Rome throughout the events. “The experience in Rome this Fall has been interesting and intense,” she said. “In addition to the launch of the institute, which has been very well received, and the weekly seminars, our panelists have brought their expertise to a series of meetings with different Vatican officials. We have visited the Secretariat of State, the Dicastery for Integral Human Development, the Pontifical Academy of Science and Social Science, the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, the Dicastery for Evangelization, the Secretariat for Latin America and more. Slowly but surely the Catholic Church is turning toward nonviolence. It is more urgent now than ever!”

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns has participated in the leadership of the CNI since its start in 2016. Director Susan Gunn attended the October 11 seminar in Rome. “Pax Christi International provided a great service to our Church,” she said, “by giving Synod participants everything they need to find answers to questions about nonviolence that were included in the synod synthesis document last year. At the seminar I attended, leading practitioners of nonviolence and theologians shared their lived experiences and understanding of the power of nonviolence to bring light to what can feel like an ever-darkening world.”

Faith in action: Watch the inaugural seminars of the Catholic Institute for Nonviolence online, and share them with your faith community. <https://mogc.info/CNI-Synod>

World AIDS Day Prayer Vigil

Join the World AIDS Day prayer vigil on the first of December.

World AIDS Day is held on December 1 each year around the world. It is an opportunity to raise awareness, commemorate those who have died, and celebrate victories such as increased access to treatment and prevention service.

Data from *UNAIDS* on the global HIV response reveals that overall funding for HIV dropped 7.9% between 2020 and 2023, and 5% from 2022 to 2023 alone.

The report states, “Funding [of \$19.8bn] is far short of the \$29.3bn which will be required for the AIDS response in low- and middle-income countries, including countries formerly considered to be upper-income countries, in 2025 to get on track to end AIDS as a public health threat.”

Meanwhile, nearly 40 million people are living with HIV as of 2023, with 1.3 million new cases and 630,000 deaths in 2023. Since the start of the pandemic, 42.3 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses.

It is no surprise, then that the theme for World AIDS Day 2024 is “Collective Action: Sustain and Accelerate HIV Progress” which in an important reminder that we must remain stalwart in our efforts for an HIV-free generation. §

Faith in action:

- Learn more about World AIDS Day
www.worldaidsday.org/
- Join the World AIDS Day prayer vigil on December:
Sign up for an hour timeslot during the 24-hour vigil
<https://mogc.info/AIDSDayVigil2024>

Prayer

God of all compassion,
Comfort your sons and daughters
Who live with HIV.
Spread over us all your quilt of mercy,
Love and peace.
Open our eyes to your presence
Reflected in their faces.
Open our ears to your truth
Echoing in their hearts.
Give us the strength
To weep with the grieving,
To walk with the lonely,
To stand with the depressed.
May our love mirror your love
For those who live in fear,
Who live under stress and
Who suffer rejection.
Mothering, fathering God
Grant rest to those who have died
And hope to all who live with HIV.
God of life, help us to find the cure now
And help us to build a world in which
No one dies alone and where
Everyone lives accepted
Wanted and loved.
Amen.

Advent Reflection Guide: One Family of God

Download the 10-page guide produced by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns. The guide offers reflections, small group questions, prayers, and actions based on each week’s Gospel reading and concerns raised by Maryknoll missionaries and affiliates who attend to the needs of migrants and refugees around the world.

Find the guide on our website at
<https://mogc.info/Advent2024>

“If peace is to come... we must see all as ‘one family of God.’ Such is the birth of Christ that we await in this time of Advent. It reveals the incarnate love of God that can turn us away from violence and conflict to see the dignity of all migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people around the world. It gives us courage to lift up our minds and hearts as we persevere with hope to find a better way together to live as one family of God on this beloved earth.”

-Father Michael Bassano, MM

Resources

1. **U.S. Elections Resources:**
 - **2024 Global Policy Briefs** on Nonviolence, Integral Ecology, Economic Justice, and Migration by MOGC <https://mogc.info/GPB>
 - **Novena Prayer** by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) at <https://mogc.info/USCCB-Novena>
 - **“Form Your Conscience”** teaching document by the USCCB <https://mogc.info/USCCB-FC>
 - **“Keep the Faith: A 2024 Toolkit for Faith Communities to Protect Democracy”** prepared by Faith Election Sabotage Response Network (ESRN) <https://mogc.info/ESRNtoolkit>
2. **Recording of forum “Nuclear Strategy: Disarmament & Deterrence in a Dangerous World,”** held Sept. 6-7, featuring Rose Gottemoeller, former deputy secretary general of NATO; Thomas Mason, director of Los Alamos National Laboratory; Cardinal Robert McElroy of San Diego; Archbishop Joseph Mitsuki Takami of Nagasaki; and others. <https://mogc.info/USCDornsife-nukes>
3. **Interview with top U.S. official working on nuclear disarmament,** published by the Arms Control Association in May. <https://mogc.info/USdisarmament>
4. **“Remembering Juan López: The Deadly Fight for Environmental Justice in Honduras”** published by North American Congress on Latin America on Oct. 18. <https://mogc.info/NACLA-JL>
5. **Statement from REMAM and the Laudato Si’ Movement** in response to the murder of our Brother Juan López <https://mogc.info/REMAM-LSM-JL>
6. **New statement “Maasai Vision of Conservation,”** published by the Maasai International Solidarity Alliance. The one-page visual summary of the Maasai vision for conservation is available at <https://mogc.info/MISA-1pager> and the full 13-page document is available at <https://mogc.info/MISA-full>
7. **Marbel diocese, Philippines, declares state of climate emergency** in all its parishes on Sept. 15. <https://mogc.info/PH-SCE>
8. **Book: Human Rights in a Divided World (2024)** by Rev. David Hollenbach, S.J., offers a comprehensive analysis of the challenges to human rights. <https://mogc.info/HRDW>
9. **Statement on South Sudan election delays** by the South Sudan Council of Churches, Sept. 17. <https://mogc.info/SSC-PR>
10. **Humanitarian Update on Sudan** by OCHA, held on Oct. 1 on how Sudan is now among the top four countries in the world with the highest prevalence of global acute malnutrition. <https://mogc.info/Sudan-10-2024>
11. **Report: The Corporate Assault on Honduras** by the Institute for Policy Studies. <https://mogc.info/IPS-HN>
12. **Policy Brief: “Protecting human rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to halt biodiversity loss,”** published by CIDSE for the UN Biodiversity Conference COP16 <https://mogc.info/CIDSE-COP16>
13. **Newsletter: Maasai International Solidarity Alliance,** September-October 2024. <https://mogc.info/MISA-Sept2024>
14. **Reflection “Gustavo Gutiérrez, ‘father of liberation theology,’ dies at 96,”** by Robert Ellsberg, editor of Orbis Books <https://mogc.info/Gutierrez>
15. **Reflection “Keeping Hope Alive” on the Anniversary of October 7** by His Beatitude Patriarch Michel Sabbah of Jerusalem. <https://mogc.info/Kairos-KHA>
16. **Churches for Middle East Peace Letter to Harris and Trump Campaigns** detailing recommendations for actions to advance peace in the next administration. <https://mogc.info/cmep-10-24>
17. **Study Guide “Papal Teaching and Migration”** by USCCB Justice for Immigrants Campaign includes prayers, Scripture readings and discussion questions for small groups to use over four sessions. <https://mogc.info/USCCB-PTM>
18. **Webinar: Our Lady Of Guadalupe and Juan Diego In The Lives Of Modern Missionary Disciples** by the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers Missionary Discipleship Formation program on **Dec. 10, 8pm ET.** Register: <https://mogc.info/GuadalupeWebinar>