

On Line and On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

marymotherofjesus.org



Jean Donovan and Sr. Dorothy Kazel, OSU. Both worked together at Immaculate Conception parish in La Libertad, El Salvador..

41st Anniversary
Jean Donovan and El Salvador Martyrs
Graveside Service via ZOOM
Thursday, December 2, 2021 at 4 PM

SALVADORAN MARTYRS—I was privileged to spend a week with the Cleveland Diocesan team during the Summer of 1980 as the invited guest of Paul Schindler, team leader and Pastor in La Libertad. Incidentally, Dorothy, seen above, is pictured as the “real” Dorothy—since so many photos of her are way “off,” in my opinion. And it speaks well of Jean, though we never met. She was at the time on a “holiday” trip to Ireland. Mostly, I spent the greater part of the week tagging along after Dorothy. I was given the “expanded version” of a tour, with constant interruptions of people and parishioners in need “right now.” And when I say that, I surely did not mean people were interruptive or demanding. They merely stood in need and Dorothy responded.

Day after day, I was exposed to this labor of love that was the life of a missionary. And I was

indeed grateful for the experience. In fact I was sure to be joining them soon as I had asked my bishop to include me on the team. It was not to be for many reasons. But it was the end for Dorothy and Jean—who, only a few months later—were raped and killed by Salvadoran security soldiers.

As we remember the gift of these four women, our hearts go out to the missionaries still in the field. My classmate, Paul, is back at La Libertad as pastor for life—his gift to his people. May the spirit of these four women live on in those who serve.

OFFERINGS—If you have made a recent donation to our community, we thank you for your generosity. We are most grateful for your care and concern for our community. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota. FL 34238.

Remember: MMOJ continues to donate 5% of all received offerings each month to Outreach, which will continue to focus on real issues of food and hunger in our surrounding communities.

OUTREACH—The current recipient of our offered financial support continues to be All Faiths Food Bank of Sarasota [AFFB] in its mission of providing food for hungry and needy children. Hunger deprives children of more than just-food. Child hunger = serious health consequences as well as negative impacts on prospects for future success.

Your gift is critical to help provide the nutritious food boys and girls need to learn, grow, and thrive.

According to the latest estimates, as many as 13 million children in the United States live in “food insecure” homes. That phrase may sound mild, but it means that those households don’t have enough food for every family member to lead a healthy life. Please be generous in your offering to ease child hunger.

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com

MOVIE CORNER

Our favorite covid confinement series was the Netflix original **Lupin**. The series is a reimagining of the books written by French author, Maurice Leblanc in the early 1900's. The books center around a gentleman thief and detective, Arsène Lupin, who has been likened to Sherlock Holmes. The current television series is set in modern day Paris and tells the story of Assane Diop, who is a Lupin devotee and patterns his search for truth and justice on incidents from the book. The series is set both during his boyhood and adult life as he seeks to unravel a mystery from his childhood. Omar Sy, as Diop, heads up a truly talented international cast.

Again, send your comments, criticisms, suggestions, thumbs up or down. And most of all PLEASE SEND YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHAT TO WATCH to ponce.beth@gmail.com
—Beth Ponce

VOICE OF EXPERIENCE—“My ordeal was long and traumatic. It’s impossible to describe the terror I felt. I knew I had to my faith and somehow stay hopeful but it was very hard.

I wrote 175 letters: to lawyers and innocence projects; to anyone who I thought could help me.

One after another, in English and Spanish. That’s how I held together while I was in prison and on death row for a crime I did not commit. It wasn’t easy to stay hopeful; but I was one of the lucky ones, if you can call it that. My family never lost faith in me; and I never lost faith in God.

It took 14 years, 19 days in prison—10 1/2 of those years on Florida’s death row—for my determination to pay off. I came to this country from Honduras, to escape the violence that plagues too many neighborhoods there. I was happy to be here, free of fear, and ready to build a life. But then my nightmare began.

My neighbors were murdered in 2004; and shortly after, I was arrested, charged, tried, convicted, and sentenced to death for the crime. I was innocent; but, as I learned the hard way, innocence doesn’t always matter—especially when there is pressure to convict and a poor, Spanish-speaking person is to blame.

I taught myself English and started to write letters to anyone who might be able to help me prove my innocence. One of the letters landed at the Innocence Project, which started working with my public defenders. They followed up on key evidence that no one had bothered to investigate.



Soon, there was a breakthrough. New DNA testing and confessions from the actual perpetrator led the Florida Supreme Court to unanimously overturn my conviction. It took two more years for the State Attorney to drop the charges; but I was finally free. On Nov. 5 2018, I became the 28th person exonerated from Florida’s death row. Since my release, there have been two more exonerations in Florida. That means 30 persons have endured a nightmare like mine. That should be enough evidence for anyone to take death off the table. The idea that an innocent person might be executed by the state is horrific. Why would we ever take a chance on that? How can we reject violence by committing more violence?

People ask me all the time if I am angry. Of course I am, angry at what happened to me. But I am not hateful. My faith is rooted in mercy and forgiveness. I am still

trying to

adjust, and I

am still fighting

for

compensation from the state for my suffering. But I know things will get better. Meantime, I use my voice for justice, working with “Witness to Innocence” and “Floridians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty,”—two organizations that labor on behalf of the wrongfully convicted as well as seeking an end to the death penalty.

I did not give up on myself, so I won’t give up for others.—as shared by Clemente Aguirre-Jarquín

Floridians for Alternatives to the Death

Penalty [FDAP] is temporarily a Fiscally Sponsored Project. You can make a secure donation via PayPal through our fiscal sponsor, The Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy [FCFEP], a 501(c)(3) organization. Your gift will be tax-deductible in the U.S. To donate online, just go to www.fadp.org and click on “Donate.”

To donate by check, make out to FCFEP with “for FADP” in the memo line and mailed to : FCFEP/ 579 E. Call Street/Tallahassee, FL 32301.

QUOTE—I do feel that God is with the movement of noncooperation. I have no special revelation of God’s will. My firm belief is that God reveals [self] daily to every human being, but we shut our ears to that ‘still small voice.’ We shut our eyes to the ‘pillar of fire’ in front of us.”—*Mohandas Gandhi*



COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS ON VATICAN II

VAT II AFTER-EFFECT— The question is this: What do you see to be the most significant after-effect of Vatican II?

First, we heard from Ann Cooke and Jack Duffy, followed by Jan LoGalbo, Suzanne Bires, Jerry Bires, Michael Rigdon, and Maryal Gagnon, Janet Blakeley, Bridget Mary Meehan, Mary Kay Staudohar, and Pat MacMillan. Today we hear from:

ANNA DAVIS

What stays with me is the affection and appreciation that my friends of the Jewish faith had for Pope John XXIII. They called him "Our Pope." His speeches reminded the world that "we were all made in God's image." He reached out to All religious groups striving for a peaceful union of God's people.

My Jewish friends liked to attend some Christmas Midnight Masses at the Catholic Church where my daughter sang in the choir. They joined in all the prayers, except communion. In my opinion this could never have happened if there never had been VATII.—*Anna Davis*

BETH PONCE

Since I was brought up very ethnic German Lutheran Missouri Synod and did not become Catholic until the late 1970's, well after Vatican II, my comments are very much the impressions of an outsider and, I'm sure, contain misconceptions as well. And for those I apologize.

Looking back it amazes me that two religions with such similar beliefs could each think the other was, at the least, wrong, and at the extreme, damned. But we've, maybe, grown from there. At least the Catholic Church has due to Vat II. I liken it to my own perceptions of Psalm 23 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. I always kind of saw this as a sweet revenge with God honoring me over those I perceived as my enemies. Gradually though I began to realize that this could not be the intention of a God who loved everyone...even my enemies. Now I see this as my enemies becoming my friends, at table, in the presence of God together. I think Vatican II has started a similar shift in the church.

I was able to marry in the Catholic Church with out converting and was, therefore, allowed to choose this path on my own. This I always perceived to be a result of Vat II. I'm not sure I would have been able to join a preVat II church. Until recently, we have always lived in college towns with Newman Centers that embraced the essence of Vat II. Unfortunately our current

Newman Center seems hell bent (no judgement implied) on returning to a pre Vatican II orthodoxy. How grateful I am to have the opportunity to join MMOJ.



I remember working with a boilermaker post Vatican II who talked about fighting in Europe during World War II. He didn't care for the change in language because he appreciated that he could go to mass in whatever country he was stationed and could understand the liturgy, knew the Latin and could participate. Although this

seems like a valid argument, I have learned for myself, that it is not always necessary to understand the words. You already know the meaning and it can be a kind of contemplative mass and a letting go of having to understand and be in control. I just lift up my prayers and say yes, God, whatever they're saying.

The saddest part of Vatican II is that it has not been embraced wholeheartedly. It might have saved us a lot of our recent heartaches.—*Beth Ponce*

annual community meeting next weekend following Liturgy

The Annual Budget, recently accepted by the MMOJ Board, will be presented and distributed [sent out in a package of materials] to the entire MMOJ community for our consideration. Members will be expected to read over and note their questions and remarks which will be the basis for discussion at the Annual Meeting. Following the acceptance of the Annual Budget, our attention will focus on the issue of community Outreach and Tithing.

Bridget Mary Meehan and Michael Rigdon will remind us of our history and our development over the past sixteen years. Each of us will be invited to reflect on what it is we value and want to include or create in the MMOJ worshipping community going forward. So, let's take some time in the next few weeks to think about our cherished community and bring our ideas, suggestions and dreams to our Annual Meeting Saturday, December 4, following our Liturgy.

ADDED NOTE: Though the MMOJ website has fallen into disrepair, Jack McKillip has volunteered to clean up, restore and update the site. If you have something you wish to post on our community website, contact Jack at the following: jamckillip48@hotmail.com

STAFF—*Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce, Lee Breyer, Anna Davis, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features*

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