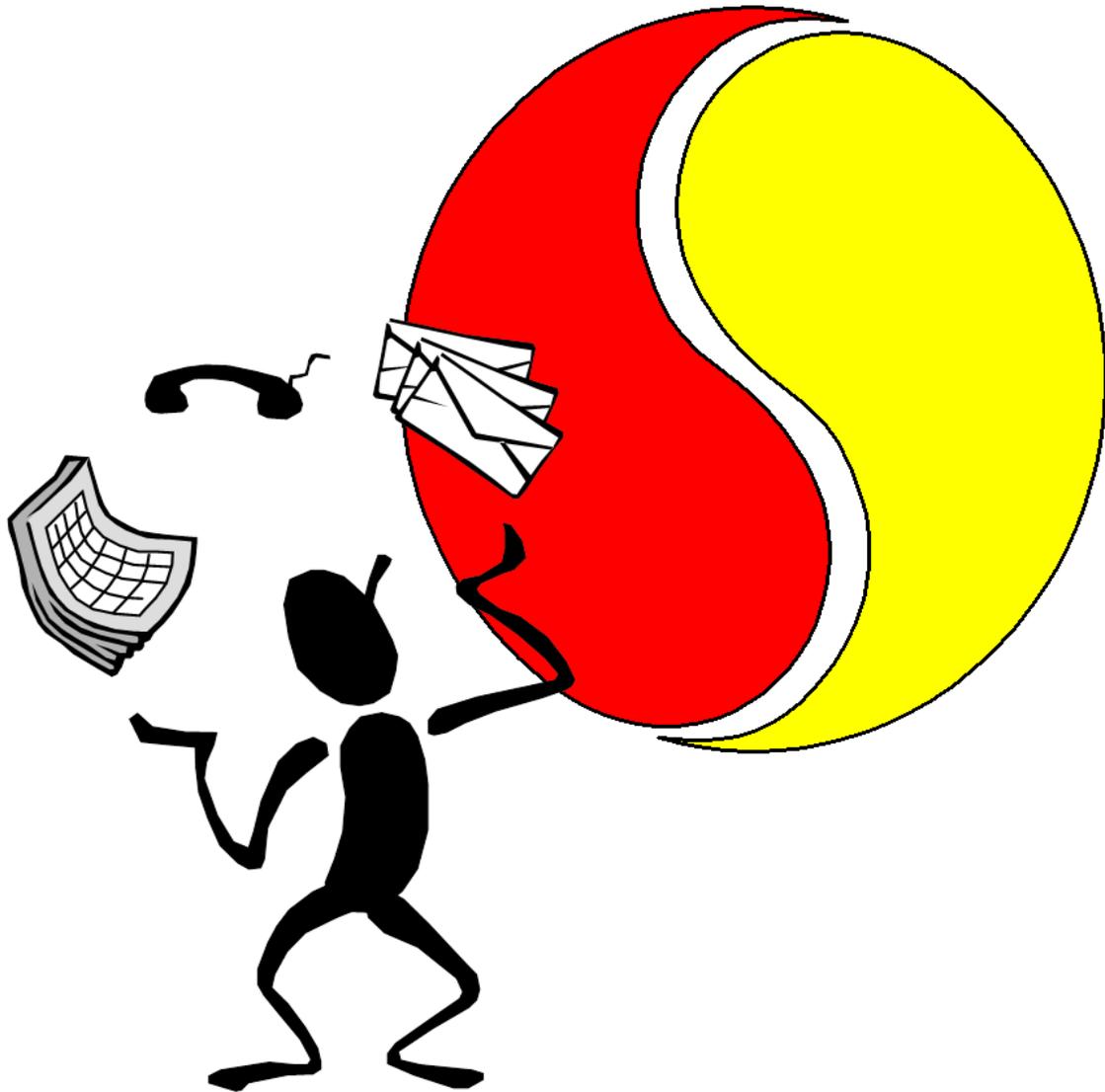


Latin Quarter



**Medical Mission Sisters
Latin America
October-November 2014**

◆ Latin Quarter ◆

November-December 2013

Editorial



Dear friends and readers,

After long time, we are here in order to get in touch with you, share life and hope. From Latin America, we send you greetings of peace and unity.

In this part of the world where violence, death, struggles, and contradiction seem to escalate each day, we experience God strengthening and inspiring us.

The God of life who accompanies us, continues to grace us, so that we may be signs of love, hope, peace, life and unity in our world today. God is the merciful healer who is with us, inviting us to be witnesses of His/her Kingdom. Witnesses, to the Light giving us light so that we may be light in the darkness, healers of the sick and persons of life and hope.



We recognize that communication is essential part of our life, so we want to share our experiences. For this, once again, Latin Quarter wants to share with you our MMS life and mission in Peru and Venezuela. We would like to share with you the struggles, celebrations, achievements, desires, needs, hopes, joys and dreams of all of us who've journeyed and are journeying with our people in these places, where we commit ourselves to go on, living our vision in solidarity with those made poor.

This is the spirit of our Society. We would like to foster and always maintain in our sector.

I thank each one of you for your support and contribution to this newsletter. Greetings.



Sr. Maigualida Riera
Editor of this edition.



FINAL VOWS CELEBRATION...

March 9th, 2013 was a very special day in my life. The day when I made my Final Vows as MMS. It was a moment of profound happiness shared with many significant people. A moment to thank God for the gift of life and the call to religious life as a Medical Mission Sister.

When I look back to the last ten years of my life with MMS, I can see the slow and dedicated work of God in me and his many invitations to grow, to learn, to follow her more radically, to move on. Each beautiful or difficult experience has shaped my life, my commitment, my choice. Throughout this journey, I have felt the loving, close and unconditional accompaniment of God.

Thanks to our Sisters, for have walked and keep walking with me. For the charisma, vision, mission and dreams we share. For our quest to be a healing presence in the world.

For the mutual love, the joys and challenges that are part of sharing our lives. Thanks to my family for all they have meant and mean in my life. For what we have learned together; for being very present to each other's lives and the love we share. Thanks to the friends who have constantly left their footprint of love in my life.

My deep gratitude to my spiritual companions and many other individuals and groups who have inspired me and continue to be referents and motivates my commitment to the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus in the midst of the joys, sufferings and challenges of today's world. Thanks for helping me in many ways to seek God's will for my life and respond to it.

Thanks especially to mothers and children with whom I share day to day. For the many things they have taught me and because they reveal to me, God, your tenderness, your love and your grace. Through them you show me how important it is to live in hope. They challenge me and urge me to respond to Your call. But above all, thanks to you, God of LIFE, for the deep certainty that in any life circumstance you will be there, walking besides me. Let me live from that trust my journey as Medical Mission Sister and bring your close, loving presence, to those to whom I encounter on the way.



Mafe

THE THREE HEROINES OF GUATEMALA: SHARING A BEATIFUL STORY

The Judge, the Attorney General and the Nobel Peace Laureate by Amy Goodman Former Guatemalan President Efraim Rios Montt was hauled off to prison last Friday. It was a historic moment, the first time in history that a former leader of a country was tried for genocide in a national court. More than three decades after he seized power in a coup in Guatemala, unleashing a U.S.-backed campaign of slaughter against his own people, the 86-year-old stood trial, charged with genocide and crimes against humanity. He was given an 80-year prison sentence. The case was inspired and pursued by three brave Guatemalan women: the judge, the attorney general and the Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Former Guatemalan dictator Efraim Rios Montt (Reuters /Jorge Dan Lopez)

"My brother Patrocinio was burnt to death in the Ixil region. We never found his remains," Rigoberta Menchu told me after Rios Montt's verdict was announced. She detailed the systematic slaughter of her family: "As for my mother, we never found her remains, either.

... If her remains weren't eaten by wild animals after having been tortured brutally and humiliated, then her remains are probably in a mass grave close to the Ixil region. ... My father was also burned alive In The embassy of Spain [in Guatemala City] on January 30th, 1980." Rigoberta Menchu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, "in recognition of her work for social justice and ethno-cultural reconciliation based on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples."She continued telling me about her family's destruction: "In 1983, My brother Victor Menchu was also shot dead. His wife had her Throat slit, and he was fleeing with his three children. Victor was jailed In the little town, but his three children were kept in a military bunker. My two nieces died of hunger in this military base, and my brother Victor was shot. We still have not found his remains."

According to the official Commission on Historical Clarification, which undertook a comprehensive investigation of Guatemala's three-decade genocide, at least 200,000 people were killed. Menchu brought one of the original lawsuits against the perpetrators of the genocide, which resulted in the trial that ended with Rios Montt's

Conviction...

Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey was appointed as Guatemala's first female attorney general in December 2010, and has earned wide acclaim for her pursuit of perpetrators of crimes against humanity. The judge in the case is another woman, Yasmin Barrios. In a country where, historically, people who challenge those in power are often Killed Paz y Paz and Barrios demonstrated tremendous courage. Journalist Allan Nairn, who has covered Guatemala, among other conflict zones, since the early 1980s, observed the trial. In mid-April, the trial was ordered shut down by another Guatemalan court, presumably under the influence of President Otto Perez Molina. From Guatemala City, Nairn reported then: "The judge, Yassmin Barrios, and the attorney general, Claudia... Paz y Paz, both say they're Going To defy this order to kill the case, which is extraordinary." They continued the trial, and eventually Rios Montt was found guilty said, after the verdict: "Judge Barrios ... ran the trial. She was the one who had to deliver the verdict. As she left the courthouse Every night, you could see her wearing a bulletproof vest. The judges And prosecutors involved in the case received death threats.



In One case, a threat against a prosecutor, the person delivering the threat put a pistol on the table and said, 'I know where your children are.' It takes a lot of courage to push a case like this." Menchu said: "This verdict is historic. It's monumental. The verdict against Rios Montt is historic.

We waited for 33 years for justice to prevail. It's clear that there is no peace without justice." It is all the more so because it occurred in a national court in Guatemala. She noted that the International Criminal Court, as currently empowered, could not have taken the case, saying:

"It's not retroactive. It doesn't address those cases that were committed before the court was

created.

So the statute of limitations on the International Criminal Court should be lifted." Nairn was supposed to testify at the trial. One interview he conducted in 1982 has attracted widespread attention. On camera, he spoke with "Major Tito," who said entire families of indigenous villagers worked with the guerrillas. Tito's troops told Nairn that they routinely

killed such civilian villagers. "Tito," it turns out, is none other than the current president of Guatemala, Otto Perez Molina. Nairn sees the guilty verdict against Rios Montt as an opening to potential prosecution of Perez Molina and others: "There would be Hundreds Of U.S. officials who were complicit in this and should be subpoenaed, called before a grand jury and subjected to indictment - including [President Reagan's Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights]

Elliott Abrams. And the U.S. should be ready to extradite them to Guatemala to face punishment, if the Guatemalan authorities are able to proceed with this. And General Perez Molina is one who should Be Included. "Regardless of where the case goes from here, Guatemala has set an example for the world, away from violence and impunity or as Nairn puts it, "Guatemala's Mayans have reached a higher level of civilization than the United States." Denis Moynihan contributed research to this column.

By Amy Goodman and Denis Moynihan

"There is no peace without justice."



KNOWING OUR NEW MEMBERS...



Hello I am Maily Martinez, I am in my 2nd year as STV. I am Venezuelan, born in the city of Barquisimeto, where MMS, are present for more than 40 years.

After 7 and half years among medical missionary sisters, I can say with property, that I was not the one who chose to know or be Medical Missionary Sister, because I had never heard about them. A good day Jesus gave me the opportunity to know them through specific people. The interesting thing has been that through Jesus I met them, and through them, I have been able to find the God of life and abundance, of labor and delivery, the God of the poor who walks along side them, by taking flesh, making himself one among them.

That is why today I can say, that I choose the religious life, I choose to be a Medical Mission Sister, because I believe that my commitment and my duty as a Christian Going beyond being catechist, to give some hours of my life to the project of Jesus, but I want to offer my whole life, to the construction of God's Kingdom.

Here I am; letting myself seduced by the everyday life, by the experiences, for my people, by the responsibilities that I'm assuming, convinced that we are doing the task that Jesus commanded us "love one another as God loves us", Our mission, without the love we put in it, it would be dead work, may not bear fruit. Today more than ever before God calls us, to be awake, to cultivate our sensitivity, to be more profound, contemplative in the action. To maintain the living fire in our life.

We must keep being a healing presence in the heart of the most needy, not only in the material needs, but also spiritual and emotional. We are called to be testimony of the love of God, from our weaknesses and possibilities. God trusts me, he invited me to be part of his disciples. It gives me hope that I am not alone in this.

I thank God for inviting me to be one of his disciples, Thank You for knowing for MMS community, where I can follow, serve and be happy ... Thank you for having sisters around the world, that even I don't know personally, we are very close. I am grateful that we are united by the same love, by the same faith, by prayer, by the same mission ...

Sr. Maily

Hna. Maily Martinez.
Venezuela, Sector America Latina.

NEWS FROM VENEZUELA...

One of the most difficult time we face this year in Venezuela, was the death of our President Hugo Chávez, who died on March 5 at the age of 58. He was diagnosed with cancer in 2011. thousands of people flooded the streets of the capital Caracas. Many cried and hugged in public shows of emotion and love for him.



Charismatic and controversial, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was the most influential Latin American leader of this generation, there are few leaders who have the power to synthesize an entire people's hopes, dreams and aspirations in such a brilliant way that their loss is felt in ripples across the globe. The loss of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez had such an impact at all level.

Inspired by Venezuelan independence hero Simon Bolivar, he was an outspoken advocate of regional unity in opposition to US "imperialism". His example inspired left-wing leaders to win power across Latin America. He also cut a provocative stance on the world stage, forging links with US enemies such as Iran.

Before Hugo Chavez came to power in Venezuela in 1998, left-wing leaders struggled to win elections in Latin America. Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru - all voted in left-wing presidents of varying shades, all inspired to some degree by Hugo Chavez. Our president was a leader who emphasized tackling poverty and social injustice, and who took a critical view of US influence. For this and many other reasons, he was so loved by the majority of our people, specially in the "barrios", where the poor live.

It is important to know that in 1999, over 80 percent of Venezuela lived in poverty. The wealth gap was one of the largest on the planet. The Bolivarian Revolution initiated by Chávez has the goal of building a country that "is now for everyone." The massive "missions" that have been established have not only eradicated illiteracy and put health care in every community, but have had a much more far-reaching goal: to create participatory democracy where the most basic unit of government is actually not in Caracas but on every block. This sentiment of "poder popular" (people's power) is alive in the people here in my country. The people now live dignified lives. They no longer feel isolated from political life (or life in general). Although there are still significant problems, one gets the feeling that a state truly exists for the people, not over the people.

In Venezuela, the youth are keen to read and gain knowledge about what's happening in our country. It is not that they do not love playing video games just like other youth, but, they are more interested in the political process that we are living at this moment of our life. They legitimately feel like they have a stake in their society. Chávez built 13,000 new homes for the people who during many years was forgotten by the different governments. He gave back their dignity as a human. Specially for the women, children and elderly people. Although our president is gone, his vision lives in the nearly 6 million members of his United Socialist Party, and in the heart of many people. For the first time Venezuela, really has a President who cares about the poor and the marginalized, who promoted the identity as Latin American People.

Sharing some pictures...

Sharing our life and Mission in Latin America



News, Greetings and Thanks...



- ◆ **After one year in USA** learning English and knowing our Mission there, our Venezuelan Sister Norys Navas, is back in Venezuela. She is very happy with her experience, Once again the whole SECTOR wants to Give special THANKS to our Sisters in the USA for the care, attention, and welcome to our Sisters who are going there to learn English. Latin Quarter gives a BIG welcome to Norys and our Gratitude to all of our Sisters in USA.

- ◆ **Going...** After long time in Venezuela, Sr. María Salema, is back in India. The whole SECTOR wants to Give special THANKS to Maria for all her sharing with us, and with our people in Venezuela.



Celebrations, Visits, and Meetings...

March 9th – Maria Fernanda (Mafe) made her Final Vows in Callao-Peru

April 28th - We celebrated 10 years of COFARI in Arequipa. Rehabilitation Program for families with children with disabilities.

June 16th – We celebrated 40 years of MMS presence in Peru. Formator Meeting in Africa: Maigualida and Cris, Participated in this.

September: Official Visit of Sr. Elizabeth and Agnes.

September: MMS foundation day... In Venezuela, We had very beautiful celebration, 4 new associate made their commitment, Sr. Agnes was present.

October–GA Assembly in Lima-Peru.

Comings and goings...

In June: Birgit attended the Katholikentag (National encounter of Catholics)

In July: Mai and Christianne attended the IFM in Kenia, Nairobi-Africa.

In September: Birgit was invited by TEOLOGANDA (a group of women theologians) to celebrate their 10th anniversary in Argentina.

In January 2014. Sr. Norys Navas, our Venezuelan Sister will move to Arequipa, Peru, for her new mission assignment.

- ◆ Latin Quarter would like to SEND our **Special GREETINGS** to our Sisters, friends and benefactor, who are sick. We just want to say we remember you in our prayers. The whole Sector is with you at this moment of your life. Best Wishes.

- ◆ **GOLDEN and SILVER JUBILEE...** Latin Quarter is sending its special CONGRATULATIONS to our Sisters Nina, Teresa Jaramillo, Benet, Gertrud Provost, Carol Huss and Bernardine, from USA, who are celebrating their 50 years in MMS, and Sr. Emma Panizales, in Venezuela who celebrated her 25 years in our Society as a Medical Mission Sister. Thank you for your presence in our life, in in our Society!

- ◆ **ANNIVERSARY...** This year, we celebrated 40 years of our Presence in Perú. The whole Sector is sending its Special Greetings, love, prayers and support to our Sisters there... And thank you very much to all the Sisters who dedicated or are dedicating their life in mission with our people in Perú.!

- ◆ **Note from the Editor...** My dear Sisters, Thank you very much for your articles, It's only when we write and share our experiences, that our newsletter could be published. Everybody wants to read it. It will help our Sisters and friends to understand more about our life in Latin America. I encourage all of you my Sisters in our Sector, to write, and to keep in touch, with the whole Society through your sharings and reflections. THANK You!





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In this Issue...

A Special Greetings to all the Medical Mission Sisters all over the world...

"We are always in need of being stimulated, of getting ideas all our lives; for instance, in hymns, in music, in every shape and form."

"The personal love of Christ applied to our neighbor would make us more patient more attentive, more thoughtful, more concerned, more sympathetic..."

Mother Anna Dengel

"We are called to live the spirit of our Society. We are prompted to share our life, to be in touch with one another, to let our heart speak and express how the Lord of life has touched us, to share how we have allowed ourselves to be the healing presence of Jesus, the Healer in our wounded world. We hope that through this we remain connected. We are able to give support and strength to one another."

Sr. Maigualida Riera
 Editor of this edition of Latin Quarter... Next will be editing By Sr. María Fernanda en Perú.