



MIV

Marianist International Volunteers

Newsletter 13
September 2008

Marianist Family
www.marianist.org

Correspondence
José Luis Pérez
MIV Coordinator

J. J. Naón 735
(C1406DTC)
Buenos Aires, Argentina

+54 (11) 4634-2557

joseluisperez
@sinectis.com.ar

Dear friends of the Marianist Family,

In this new edition of the MIV on-line Newsletter we would like to share with you some of the latest news about our Marianist volunteers around the world:

- John, from the University of Dayton, United States, in Callao, Peru.
- Miguel, Miguel, lay marianist from Spain in Otuzco, Peru.
- María, marianist English teacher from Spain, in Kenya, for the fourth time!
- Elizabeth, volunteer from the United States, also in Kenya!
- Marianist volunteers in the United States.

The MIV is very happy to confirm that the call to international volunteerism is moving so many people of the Marianist Family around the world to serve the less privileged.

However, we are aware that some experiences have had their lights and shadows, and we hope to learn from the experience that running a small program like the MIV will teach us to strengthen the Marianist Mission of bearing Jesus to the world through Mary, our Mother, with the silent work of our marianist volunteers and missionaries.

Remember that this publication is also available in French and Spanish, so if you need these editions, we will be happy to send them to you.

We truly appreciate all your support to the MIV mission, and remember that your collaboration in distributing this material is very important to the publicity of our program. You can either forward this Newsletter electronically, or simply print it out, so that more people get to know the MIV proposal and may later join our mission.

In Union of Spirit,

José Luis Pérez
MIV Coordinator

John Ventimiglia
ETHOS program
student, University of
Dayton (USA)

A Marianist Volunteer from the US with the ETHOS Program.

My participation in the ETHOS program was a life-changing experience. I never imagined that a seemingly short period of 11 weeks in Peru would impact my life in the way that it has. I can honestly say that as a result of this experience I have grown both as a student and as a person. Working at the Instituto Chaminade Marianistas allowed me to observe how technology is taught and implemented in a different part of the world. I was given the opportunity to strengthen my knowledge of technical support by assisting with the maintenance and advancement of the school's computer systems. In addition, I was able to learn and practice many new skills in the field of computing, which have advanced my development as a student of computer technology.

My time in Peru resulted in significant growth on a personal level as well. I learned to become more self-confident as I overcame the challenges of living in a foreign country. I discovered that I was able to adapt my way of life in order to participate fully in the Peruvian culture. Most importantly, I learned to be more communicative in all



John with his Peruvian host family.

aspects of my life, especially at home with my family. Much of the personal development I experienced in Peru can be attributed to my interaction with the host family who I was living with.



John volunteering as a future engineer.

The ETHOS program offers engineering students the chance to witness the realities and challenges faced by people in other parts of the world. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in ETHOS and to experience some of these challenges firsthand. I will never forget the time I spent in Peru, and I will carry the memories and lessons

learned from the experience with me for the rest of my life.

Miguel Perles
Member of the MLC of
the Province of
Saragosse (Spain)

A Spanish Lay Marianist in Otuzco, Peru.

I've been in Peru for over a week now, and everything I see still surprises me. The initial reason I had to cross the Atlantic was to come to Latin America on my summer vacations to visit the Equator with a friend and lay Marianist, Cristina, who is finishing her doctoral thesis here. But I couldn't come down here without visiting the mission in Otuzco, where for a couple months now I've been pondering over the idea of coming as an MIV volunteer in 2009. So we slightly changed our travel plans and we came down to Trujillo, where we met Brother Douglas, who immediately led us to Otuzco. Cristina had to go back to Guayaquil to finish some university errands, and I decided to stay a few more days here to get to know this mission more deeply.

This is my third day here, in the Rural Ministry Formation House Maria Madre del Buen Consejo, where I had the chance to join in the celebration for their 10th anniversary together with some peasants, pastoral agents and people from the nearby hills. Besides, this morning I also had the chance to get to know Capuli, one of the small villages where this mission is developed. A rural woman invited me for dinner, and she made me some rice with potatoes and eggs, it was delicious! They have no water or electricity in their homes, and they cook with wood! But their smile is always present in their faces, their eyes, their smile, they truly get my attention, and for me, they represent the image of God.

Perhaps what appeals to me the most about the mission in Otuzco is that it has always been carried out by lay people from the start, with the constant support of the religious, but this mission has a clear lay character. At the moment a married couple with their two kids live here, together with two other volunteers, supported by Brother Douglas. And who knows, perhaps in a few months I'll also be here with them... For the time being I will need to spend some time to discern and pray about the possibility to volunteer here next year.



María Pilar Liz
MIV Volunteer
from Spain to Kenya

**Why not
 come back
 there, where
 it's so easy
 to feel
 God's
 presence.**

Greetings to all. I'm writing these lines from my second home, NAIROBI. As I told you in my last article, I'm back here!!!! Why not come back to the place where you feel so happy, where you are not concerned about material possessions, where it's so much easier to feel God's presence.

So, here I am in Kenya, for 2 more months. I arrived on July 4th and I'll be here until August 29th. I wish I could stay here longer, but I only have 2 months of summer vacations, so I'll make the most of what I have. J

You may probably wonder why I have come back here for the fourth time! Well, I never wondered why myself. Coming back here is like going back home, it's like «going back home for Christmas», you never wonder why, you just can't wait for Christmas to go back home.

I still feel the same things I did when I came here for the very first time, all the things that appealed to me the first time still appeal to me, and I feel God is always present in my backpack, what a great chance!

I still do the same things I did in previous years: I go to Our Lady of Nazareth school from Monday to Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. I teach English, religion, and a little bit of Spanish (of course, they just love it! And so do I!), and it goes without saying that I'm still training my small girls' basketball team (I'm attaching some pics of the new «uniform» that I brought them this year. In one of these photos I'm with Angela Minayo, a wonderful 14-year-old girl, I just love sticking around her). This year I'm sharing my experience as a volunteer with Liz, a US student who will spend as many as two years here! I swear that I healthily envy her!

This year I live with Fr. Martin Solma again, a wonderful Marianist who devotes all his time and his life to the poorest. I live with Liz and 10 other Marianists in the Aspirants' House. I just love being here!

So well, this is how I'm living one more year here, one more summer in my life feeling extremely happy!



Liz Ramey
MIV Volunteer
from United States to
Kenya

Beginning of a two-year marianist volunteer service in Kenya!

«Good morning, class.»
«Good morning teacher Liz.»
«How are you today?»
«We are fine, thank you, teacher Liz. How about you?»

Forty beautiful children in red uniforms recite in unison, their voices rising at the final word to indicate that it is a question.

Welcome to Our Lady of Nazareth, a primary school run by the Marianists in the Mukuru kwa Njenga slum of Nairobi, Kenya. I am a second-time volunteer from Dayton, Ohio teaching English and social studies to the upper classes. I came to Nairobi for 10 weeks in 2007 to conduct research on the housing market in the slums as part of my undergraduate coursework at The George Washington University. At that time, my stepmother, who works for the Marianists in Dayton, put me in contact with Fr. Martin Solma, who helped me start volunteering at OLN.

Simply put, I fell in love with the students there, especially the Standard (grade) 8 students, who will finish primary school this year. Along with Maria, a wonderful volunteer from Spain, I teach classes, sing songs, play games, and just talk with the students from 9:00AM to 3:30PM each day. They teach me Swahili and I answer their questions about the United States. I learn much more from them than they learn from me, even though I am supposed to be the mwalimu (teacher). Although the children live in very poor conditions — without adequate access to clean water and consistent electricity, without proper nutrition and sanitation — they are full of joy and energy. It's completely true: kids are kids everywhere.

I enjoyed my time in Kenya so much that I decided to volunteer with the Marianists for two years now that I have finished school. First I spent two months back at OLN, and in September I will start volunteering at the Marianist Development Project in Mombasa, Kenya as a social worker and grant writer. Every day is full of new lessons, challenges, laughter, and love. Wherever life leads me, the people I've met in Kenya and the experiences I've had will remain in my heart forever.



Marianist Volunteers in the United States.

More than 50 guests attended the installation celebration for seven new Marianist volunteers on Aug. 2 at Our Lady of the Pillar Parish in St. Louis.

The Eucharist celebration followed a week-long orientation program led by Dan Richter, Marianist Volunteer Program coordinator and Ruth Pera, assistant coordinator. Fr. Tim Kenney was the main celebrant and homilist. Fr. Jim Tobin, pastor of Our Lady of the Pillar, concelebrated. Seminarian Bro. Rajesh Kumar Kandulna (District of India) assisted. Members of the MVP steering committee also were in attendance, including Bro. Dennis Schmitz and Mary Niebler. Volunteers Nicole Ansiaux, Courtney Magnier and Heather Mikus will be serving at De La Salle Middle School, Marian Middle School, and North Grand Neighborhood Services in St. Louis.

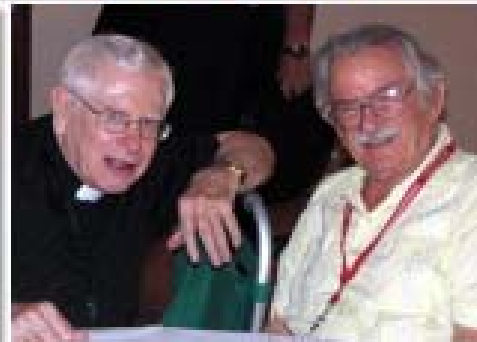
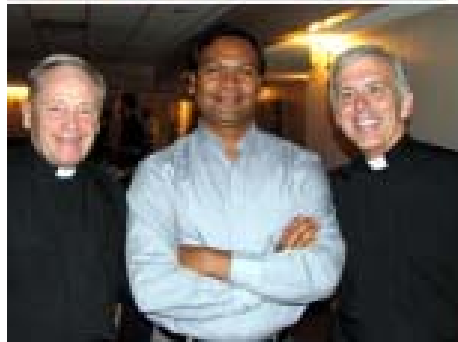
Volunteers Kat Brumm, Molly Heineman, Matt Meyers and Andy Taube will join volunteers Emily Richardson and Sarah Wdowiak, who are already serving in Karonga, Malawi.



Organizations they will serve include Chaminade Secondary School and the Women's Empowerment Program.

Our prayers and best wishes for the new volunteers!

At the commissioning ceremony, front, Ruth Pera, Heather Mikus, Katherine (Kat) Brumm, Courtney Magnier, and Dan Richter; back, Molly Heineman, Andy Taube, Nicole Ansiaux and Matt Meyers.



Clockwise from top, Bro. Dennis Schmitz gives a Kukui Nut lei to Matt Meyers; «Team Karonga:» Andy, Matt, Molly and Kat; at the reception following the Eucharist, Fr. Don Cahill and Bro. Louis Pinckert; and Fr. Jim Tobin, Bro. Rajesh, who is in seminary studies in Rome, and Fr. Tim Kenney.