



FATHER BILL MCCARTHY ('56) delivered a presentation on the Maryknoll Movement at a Mission Forum before the Society's 11th General Chapter in 2002. His article recalled that as early as 1926 the title of the first history of Maryknoll by Fr. George Powers was called "The Maryknoll Movement." Fr. McCarthy's article documented the expansion of Maryknoll's identity over the next eighty years to include the Maryknoll Brothers, Maryknoll Sisters, Maryknoll Lay Missioners, and finally the Maryknoll Affiliates.

The final paragraph of his article reads:

As Maryknoll approaches the concluding decades of our first century it is evident that our founders' vision of a variety of mission vocations has continued to be active among us: priests, Brothers, Sisters, Associates, and Lay Missioners, along with the new vocation of Affiliates—itsself a sign that the Maryknoll movement is still clearly alive. We are challenged to enable the creative spirit of our founders to continue to grow among us with renewed vigor so that, interrelated in the Maryknoll family, and with the whole Church, we can together ever more creatively serve the mission of Christ in the world.

The Maryknoll Movement has continued to evolve over the past fifteen years since Father McCarthy's article appeared in the November 2010 issue of *Interchange*. One of the areas of expansion of the Maryknoll mission charism has occurred in the nation of Kenya. Beginning in 2012 my wife, Marita Grudzen, and I began a series of mission journeys to Kenya to see the work of Maryknoll lay missionary Judy Walter in the coastal city of Mombasa. On Judy's recommendation, I



Bp. Willybard Lagho,
Malindi, Kenya

met with the vicar general of the Archdiocese of Mombasa, Father Willybard Lagho, to discuss the interfaith climate in the coastal region of Kenya. Because of the incursion of terrorist attacks in the coastal region by Al Shabaab beginning in 2011, a condition of distrust and fear was prevailing among Christians and Muslims in that region. Father Lagho was then

serving as the chairperson of the Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics (CICC), the largest interfaith organization in the coastal region. I was invited to give a series of talks to the priests and Sisters of the Mombasa Archdiocese on the history of relations between Christianity and

Islam over the past millennium.

After the events of 9/11 in NYC, I completed my doctoral studies at Columbia University on the historical interaction of Christianity and Islam and the role of these religions in creating the scientific curriculum of Western civilization. Father Lagho asked Marita and me to sponsor a summer course in the coastal region in collaboration with the CICC on the principles of interfaith dialogue and collaboration. After returning to the States, I formed a relationship with the US alumni of the American College at Louvain University in Belgium. These alumni agreed to fund a Global Ministries University-organized interfaith training project in the coastal region of Kenya beginning in 2013.

This week-long training program later received support from the Maryknoll community in Kenya. With this support we sponsored a Kenya-wide interfaith training program in 2015 at the Maryknoll Center in Nairobi with the support of Fr. Lance Nadeau, now Society superior general, and co-sponsorship by the Columbia University Global Center in Nairobi. These training programs were under the direction of Global Ministries University, an interfaith theological school based in California that offers a variety of theological courses via an online platform. (See www.globalministriesuniversity.org/.) We brought a leading scholar on Islam to Kenya for this program, Professor Richard Bulliet of Columbia University, author of *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization*, Columbia University Press, 2004).

In 2019 our interfaith educational program in Kenya affiliated with the Tangaza University Institute for Interreligious Dialogue and Islamic Studies and the Muslim interfaith organization, Harmony Institute of Kenya. This relationship has evolved into a biannual global online conference such as our February 2025 online "Fratelli Tutti" conference: "Belonging Together: Migrants, Refugees, Displaced Persons and Global Solidarity." (See www.youtube.com/channel/UC7RBUL9bMmDIAN5Mm7At3zg.)

Maryknoll Kenya Affiliate Chapter

In 2017 with support and encouragement from Fathers Russell Feldmeier ('80) and Joseph Healey ('66) we established the Maryknoll Kenya Affiliate Chapter. This Chapter was the first to bring together members in Kenya, the USA, and Europe from diverse Christian and Islamic faith traditions. Chapter members have been active in interfaith projects in Kenya's Mombasa region such as the urban organic farming project we launched in 2024. Members meet online once per month. Members in the Mombasa area meet in person on special occasions such as Ramadan and Christian holidays.

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