

1975 - 2015

Quixote Center

CHRONICLES

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In this special edition of our annual report, we are taking the time to look back on the last forty years. It has certainly been an amazing journey. We hope you enjoy this trip down memory lane and will be as inspired as we are about the course we are charting for the next forty years. The first pages of this report are dedicated to our history, and the 2014 Annual Report begins on page 6. Here's what you can find in this edition:

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A newspaper clipping from the early days featuring Sr. Maureen Fiedler, Dolly Pomerleau and Rev. Bill Callahan

In the beginning

After the Second Vatican Council, progressive Catholics were filled with optimism for substantive, structural change in the church and had the zeal to work for its accomplishment. Three of these dreamers, Sr. Maureen Fiedler, Dolores Pomerleau and Rev. Bill Callahan met in the Washington, DC area and looked for a way to work for the changes they believed in. Thus was born the idea for a Quixote Center that would be independent of institutional strictures, both church and government, leaving us free to tackle controversial issues affecting the shunned and dispossessed.

Thus we became:

A gathering of people who work and pray with laughter,
to reach for stars that seem too distant to be touched,
or too dim to be worth the effort.

We try to be friends with people in need,
and to celebrate life with people who believe that the struggle
to be like Jesus in building a world more justly loving
is worth the gift of our lives.

The Early Days

Priests for Equality

PFE, the Center's first project, began in 1975 – before we began paying salaries in 1976. Bill Callahan, SJ, and Dolly Pomerleau – operating out of a third floor walkup in Mount Rainier, MD – brought together 75 charter members to endorse the Charter of Equality in church and society to advocate for equal rights for women.

The news story went “viral” in the United States and Europe. By the end of the year, over 700 priests had endorsed the charter, and the Quixote Center was up and running.

Repercussions were not long in coming. In 1980 Jesuit Superior General Pedro Arrupe officially forbade Bill from speaking publicly in favor of women's ordination. And so began a “dialogue” that culminated with Bill's expulsion from the order in the early 1990s. PFE went underground and entered into a ten-year labor of translating the entire Bible into inclusive language – a lasting and worthy legacy that continues to be a blessing to many communities today.

New Ways Ministry

In 1976, the QC began to take on issues of homophobia and discrimination against the LGBT community in the church. The following year, those efforts led to the formation of New Ways Ministry, the first of several distinguished offspring of the Quixote Center. While we are staunch supporters of LGBT rights, the Center has not continued this work, with the exception of being part of a powerful coalition (Maryland Catholics for Marriage Equality) to pass the 2012 marriage equality referendum in Maryland.

Catholics Speak Out

To dispel various weak, but rigid, institutional arguments against women's ordination, the Center sponsored several studies on the readiness of Catholics for women's ordination as well as on the competence of women interested in serving as priests. Despite strong pushback, the Center continued its efforts. CSO's activities are too numerous to enumerate, but they include: organizing signature ads supporting people under Vatican attack, including the more recent investigation of U.S. women religious; sponsoring a tour for Ludmila Javorova, the Czech woman ordained in 1970 for service in the underground church during the communist



Ruth Fitzpatrick (then Director of the Women's Ordination Conference) and Bill Callahan at a PFE press conference



Bill Callahan, Dolly Pomerleau, Jim Jimerson and Maureen Fiedler being arrested in the Capitol for praying for the defeat of contra aid.

Quixote Center Offshoots

The Quixote Center has been an unaccredited university for young people aspiring to follow their dreams of weaving tapestries of social justice. Here we are proud to list the Quixote Center's offspring.

1976 – New Ways Ministry is a gay-positive ministry that advocates for justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Catholics and reconciliation within the larger Christian and civil communities.

1980 –The Christic Institute was a public interest law firm founded in 1980. It combined investigation, litigation, education, and organizing into a unique model for social reform in the United States. The Institute was succeeded by the Romero Institute.

1983 – Windmills, Inc. was the Quixote Center's lobbying arm. It was formed specifically to make known and increase Catholic support for the Equal Rights Amendment.

1984 – Catholics for the Common Good was a Political Action Committee (PAC) founded by Quixote staff solely for the purpose of supporting the Mondale/Ferraro presidential campaign

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Offshoot Organizations

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1998 –Potters for Peace is a nonprofit organization that has created a network of potters to improve quality of life and preserve tradition using local skills and materials. They work primarily in Nicaragua and are known for developing ceramic water filters, now used worldwide.

2001 – Interfaith Voices is a radio news magazine that is syndicated on 70+ public and community radio stations in North America. The show features interviews and produced segments covering the world of religion, spirituality, and ethics.

2008 – Equal Justice USA was one of the first organizations to identify the inequities in the U.S. legal system as a critical social justice issue. Abolition of the death penalty is its defining issue.

2008 – Books to Prisons is an all-volunteer project that sends 300 – 400 books a month to prisoners nationwide. Formerly a component of EJUSA, it found a new fiscal sponsor after EJUSA moved to New York.

2013 – Food and Faith Network builds farm-to-congregation networks (Fresh Stops!) that provide sustainably-grown fresh produce to low-income families.

occupation; organizing a national tour of Iris Müller and Ida Ramming who were ordained illicitly on the Danube River in working in coalition with national and international church reform groups; to a start-up radio program on interfaith religious issues hosted by Maureen Fiedler, a co-founder of the QC.

The Karen Silkwood Case

The case of the wrongful death of union organizer Karen Silkwood at the Kerr McGee plutonium plant in Oklahoma was taken on by the Center after it was rejected by several well known national organizations. Concerned about lax safety procedures at the plant, Silkwood compiled documentation and was to meet with a New York Times reporter when her car veered off the road, and she was killed. The documentation was missing. The case went to trial, we won the case, and the family was awarded \$10.5 million. Shortly thereafter, the QC Silkwood staff began the Christic Institute which had been a dream of theirs. Meryl Streep immortalized the case in the movie “Silkwood.”

Abolition of the Death Penalty

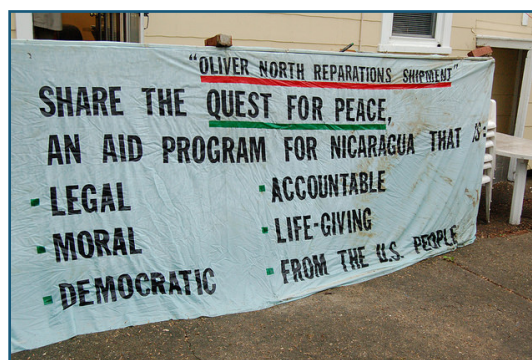
In 1986, we began a campaign named "Let Live" to end the death penalty in Maryland. It morphed into Equal Justice USA, which encouraged our country to reject the death penalty as well as the racism and economic biases that characterize our criminal justice system. The climate in the country was strongly pro death penalty, yet the QC supported this 'impossible dream' for years. Serious strategic planning and implementation began a turn-around that caught the eye of several foundations. It became clear that for EJUSA to do its best work, they needed to become an independent organization. They did so in 2008 – a serious program loss for the Center, but a major gain for the national movement toward abolition. Remaining at the Center is GRIP (Grassroots Investigation Project), which does preliminary investigation in possible innocence cases. We celebrated in 2013 when the death penalty was abolished in Maryland.



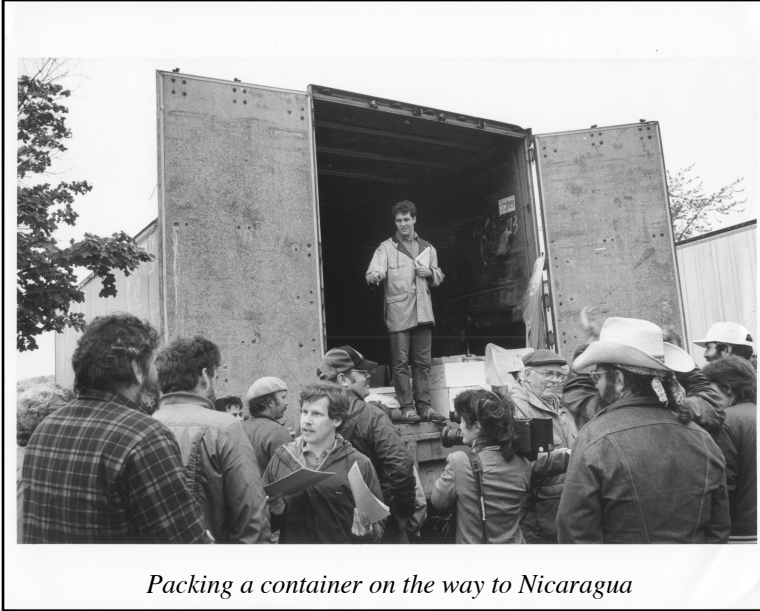
Quest for Peace

As the 1980s dawned, the QC turned its face toward Central America. Following the assassination of Monsignor Romero in San Salvador, several staff members traveled to Central America. Upon returning they created a tabloid primer: *Nicaragua: A Look at the Reality*. That tabloid sold over a quarter of a million

copies and was in high demand among non-profits interested in supporting the goals of the Sandinista revolution. President Reagan opposed the revolution, and resorted to financing the Contra War, with congressional support. The economic embargo, coupled with Congressional approval of \$27 million to support the Contras, led the Center to begin the Quest for Peace.



We pledged to match that amount with \$27 million in humanitarian aid. We did (followed by two \$100 million campaigns) and laid siege to Congress for their part in helping to destroy a dream and cause brother to kill brother. In the United States, the floodgates of grassroots interest and support were loosed, and the Quest for Peace became the national coordinating hub for the hundreds of cargo containers that were shipped to Nicaragua with humanitarian supplies. One even contained an ambulance! Our supporters coupled their donations with advocacy efforts to lobby Congress to stop the war.



Packing a container on the way to Nicaragua

For our efforts, we were awarded an investigation by Customs, a three year audit by the IRS, and a brief stopover by Pope John Paul II in Managua where he told the people to “shut up” when they chanted, “Pray for our dead.” Mr. Reagan and the Pope were equally opposed to the revolution, and the Center was in their crosshairs. The IRS audit, claimed to be randomly selected, instantly and mysteriously ended after the Sandinistas lost the presidential election to Violetta Chamorro, the candidate hand-picked by the U.S.

Throughout the northwest of Nicaragua, where the war was most intense, communities began to sell the donated clothing and household goods at symbolic prices, meeting dual goals of maintaining personal dignity and using the funds to invest in small community development projects. In 1990, following the defeat of the FSLN in the Nicaraguan

elections, attention to the region began to dry up. The QC continued working with its primary Nicaraguan partner – **the Institute of John XXIII**.

Communities across northwestern Nicaragua were forming associations to foster community development. The Institute was assisting these burgeoning groups with technical assistance, guiding them to responsible autonomy. These groups became the Federation of Campesinos (FEDICAMP).

It was after Hurricane Mitch in 1998 that the Institute began intense home building, funded largely by massive numbers of donations the Quixote Center received for emergency and reconstruction efforts. This has grown into the Homes of Hope campaign which has built hundreds of homes over the last two decades.

From the beginning of our work in Nicaragua, we collected school supplies through our Clean Your Desk Campaign. It grew to 500 participating schools throughout the United States.

Striving always to balance material aid with structural change, we regularly addressed issues in Congress that affected Latin America.



A home built by the Homes of Hope program in Nicaragua

Haiti Reborn

In 1991, after the election of Jean Bertrand Aristide – a priest – the center predicted that a combination of ecclesial and U.S. pressure would descend on that poorest nation in the hemisphere. After several false starts, we connected with the Jean Marie Vincent Formation Center run by the Monfortain Fathers and the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. The pressing need brought by that group was the devastating effects of deforestation on the island. Thus began reforestation efforts on Tet Mon and the region of Gros-Morne.



Planting trees in Gros Morne

Back home in the United States, the Center leaned in with its advocacy efforts, bringing public awareness to the political situation in Haiti following the coup that ousted Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the first democratically elected president of Haiti. Along with partner organizations here in the United States, the Center organized Haiti Solidarity Week. Over the last two decades, our partnership in Haiti has expanded beyond reforestation efforts to include sustainable agriculture training for members of the **Peasant Movement of Gros-Morne**.

Quixote Center Financial Statements 2014

Quixote Center Financial Report FY 2014* (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)

REVENUE

Donations / Grants	\$487,416.60
Publication / Product Sales	6,338.24
Other Revenue	4,770.61
Space Rental to Interfaith Voices	10,609.04
Total Revenue	\$509,134.49

EXPENSES

Program	304,229.36
Management	24,620.18
Fundraising	29,106.00
Total Expenses	\$357,955.54
Income / Expenses	151,178.95

EXPENSES BY PROGRAM

Quest for Peace	180,654.43
Criminal Justice	8,261.04
Catholics Speak Out	37,699.28
Haiti Reborn	77,641.61
Total Program Expenses	\$304,229.36



BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Cash / Equivalents	\$238,560.61
Receivables	43,651.41
Other Current Assets	35,600.00
Equipment	227.49
Total Assets	\$318,039.51

Liabilities and Equity

Accounts Payable	9,090.16
Other Current Liabilities	26,001.72
Restricted Funds	86,997.57
Unrestricted Funds	63,001.72

Net Income **\$132,948.34**

Total Liabilities & Equity **\$318,039.51**

*An audited report will be available on our website: quixote.org or we will mail it upon request.

2014 Quixote Center Annual Report

Last year the Quixote Center Board and Staff made the decision to pursue the international programs in Nicaragua and Haiti as our primary "windmills" while maintaining a watchdog role in matters related to criminal justice and Catholic Church reform. The Center's long legacy of partnership with Haitian and Nicaraguan organizations lends to us a credibility and track record that is both powerful and unique in the world of International Development efforts. More than thirty years ago, the Center pioneered the partnership model that insisted on equitable program design, development, and implementation. At the time, these efforts were incomprehensible to traditional NGO and development organizations; now this model dominates the field. The QC continues to only take on projects that make communities stronger by allowing them to determine how those projects evolve in the local context. These are the 2014 programs at the Quixote Center.

Nicaragua



A FEDICAMP member shows the fruits of her labor

The Quest for Peace is perhaps the Quixote Center's best known program. In 2014 we laid the groundwork for our two major partnerships: The Institute of John XXIII and FEDICAMP, the federation of 18 campesino communities across the country.

The Institute of John XXIII is the originator of our audacious, and potentially game-changing program: a home-grown solution to Nicaragua's devastating housing crisis. The Homes of Hope program, initiated after Hurricane Mitch ripped through the country in 1998 and left thousands hopeless and homeless, has evolved from an emergency relief effort for those without a home to a systemic response to the widespread problem of inadequate and insufficient housing.

The leadership team at FEDICAMP continued their hands-on work with peasant families in the mountainous north in 2014. The need became more apparent during the summer when the first planting was wiped out by a sustained droughts caused by the ever-increasing effects of global climate change. In response, we have launched the Oasis Project to construct efficient irrigation systems for family farms. Each system brings the constant water supply needed to secure food production even in dry times.

Participating families commit to providing fresh seeds at harvest to FEDICAMP network of seed banks. In this way the irrigation systems also help ensure community-wide production by making available high quality organic seeds at low prices. To date, they have constructed eight irrigation systems, and FEDICAMP technicians have trained the beneficiary farmers on their use. We plan to construct nine more before the planting season begins in May 2015.



A Fedicamp leader at a training for members

Haiti Reborn



The Jean Marie Vincent Formation Center

Haiti Reborn has been working on radical efforts at reforestation for more than fifteen years. The story of the Quixote Center's work began with a model forest planted on Tet Mon, a once barren mountain just outside Gros-Morne proper. This now green mountain exists in a sea of erosion that has crippled Haiti's abilities to feed itself. The once fertile topsoil had been washed away in storms that are becoming more intense each year. In this difficult context, Haiti Reborn has been instrumental in a transformation that is now spreading outward from the mountain into villages and remote homesteads. The most important transformation is in the hearts and minds of the people who now believe that they can have some power over the quality of their daily lives by transforming and healing their environment.

The Jean Marie Vincent Formation Center (named for the famous Haitian priest), situated adjacent to Tet Mon, serves many functions. The first, and perhaps most important, is the production of trees for distribution among peasant families who agree to manage their land sustainably. In 2014, the Formation Center produced more than 60,000 trees. Our staff of technicians also oversee a model farm where new techniques in intensive organic cultivation are tested for popular use. In 2014 those technicians hosted trainings to teach farmers new techniques like double-digging and crop rotation. As with all trainings, the technicians focused on ways families can make the most out of a tiny plot of land.

In Gros-Morne, some neighborhoods have taken this concept further, collectively farming communal plots shared among families. The resulting produce provides nutrients lacking in much of the "food aid" imported from around the globe.

From a base in Gros-Morne, and with close ties to the Jean Marie Vincent Formation Center, the Peasant Movement of Gros Morne continued its work to engage peasant producers in the fight against deforestation, commercial agriculture domination, and unsustainable methods of production. The ranks of the Peasant Movement have now swelled to more than 12,000, and Marcel Garçon has continued his capable tenure as the elected leader of the Movement. The Movement has now progressed beyond the basic political organizing that characterized it in the early days and graduated to more holistic development activities.



A home visit for a gardener in Gros-Morne

In 2014 those included:

- Increased farmer outreach and training on the importance of reforestation, ecological management, and an organic system of smallholder food production;
- The establishment of satellite tree nurseries to provide seedlings to those too remote to travel to the Jean Marie Vincent Formation Center to retrieve young trees for their property;
- The ongoing repair, or reclamation, of massive miles-long ravines cut into the land by the long and inexorable process of erosion through manual construction of soil-preserving walls of stone that also trap run-off water as it races down the mountainside.



Marcel Garcon, leader of the JMV Center, at a ravine reclamation site

The Green Schools Network, with sixty-five affiliated public, private, and parochial schools, expands the scope of this work further into the countryside. We began working with the network in 2014 by providing funds for the construction of an on-site tree nursery in Gran Plenn. Before the nursery was constructed, the school children traveled by foot to retrieve and carry back seedlings from the JMV Center. Now, with the new nursery in place and experienced Green Schools Network staff tending it, the students at Gran Plenn produced approximately 15,000 trees in their inaugural year and distributed them among seven member schools.

Catholics Speak Out

CSO sponsored another national tour in the United States. This time dissident Father Tony Flannery of Ireland spoke to crowds across the country in defense of individual conscience and in favor of change within the church structure. His message was a call to include more voices of the faithful in institutional discussions and decision making. Sales of our Inclusive Language Series continued to rise as communities across the country embrace language that is not sexist, racist, classist or heterosexist in worship and daily conversation.

Moving Forward

As we move into the next forty years of work, we are proud to bring the successes of our past with us. We will continue working in our partner communities in Haiti and Nicaragua, with our unique locally led model of development work. We hope within the next five years to have a self-sustaining housing program in Nicaragua that can be replicated in other communities. We hope to expand our reforestation efforts in Haiti to make a larger impact on farming communities there. With your support here in the United States we plan to increase our advocacy efforts to raise awareness and create change. Thank you for all you do to support the Quixote Center and our ongoing quest for social justice.

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Nancy Sulfridge

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Frank O'Donnell
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Nancy Sulfridge