



## Maryknoll Sisters

*Making God's love visible*

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June 28, 2013

Dear Sisters, Relatives and Friends,

At about 8 AM on June 20, 2013 Sister Gertrude Maley passed into the fullness of life as many of her Sisters were at her bedside singing and praying with her in English and Swahili. Sister Gertrude was 86 years of age and had been a Maryknoll Sister for 67 years.

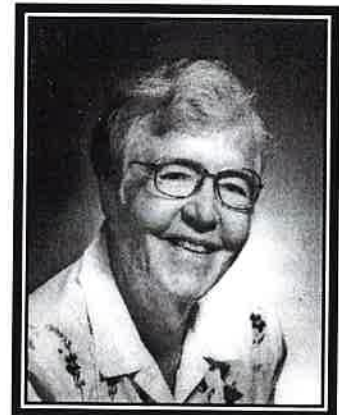
Sister Gert, as she was affectionately called, was born in Richmond Hill, New York City, on November 1, 1926 to William Francis and Gertrude Marie (Johnson) Maley. Her one sibling, Dorothy O'Brien has pre-deceased her.

Her early education was in her home area of Richmond Hill. She graduated from Our Lady of Wisdom Academy in Ozone Park and attended one semester at Queens College before entering Maryknoll on September 6, 1945. Six months later on March 7, 1946, at her Reception into the Congregation, she received the religious name of Sister Marie William. On March 7, 1948, Gert pronounced her First Vows at Maryknoll, NY. She continued her studies in Maryknoll Teachers College obtaining a Bachelor of Education degree before being assigned to Africa in 1950. In 1979, Gert received an MA in Religious Studies from the Maryknoll Seminary, Maryknoll, NY. On March 7, 1951, she pronounced her Final Vows in Tanzania.

Sister Gert and Sister Rose Miriam Dagg were the second assignees to the new Africa mission begun in 1948. After her language study, Gert began teaching in the Primary School in Kowak, Tanzania, which had been started for the Aspirants to the new Congregation, Immaculate Heart Sisters of Africa. In 1959 the school, now called Immaculate Heart Training School moved to Makoko, about 50 miles away and Gert moved with it as its Headmistress. With the need for additional staff in the school, a number of Maryknoll Sisters were assigned to Africa. During these years, Gert is remembered as always ready for a party. Singing and dancing was the hallmark of the Makoko Community. Yes, there was always much laughter around Gert. Is it any wonder that some of her confreres nicknamed her 'Bubbles'?

Ending her time at Immaculate Heart Training School in 1965, Gert left for studies in *Lumen Vitae* in Belgium. She returned to Musoma after her studies in 1967 working in Catechetics in the Diocese until her assignment in 1968 as Vice Director in Gaba Pastoral Institute in Kampala, Uganda. The years 1968 to 1974 at Gaba were perhaps the happiest in all her time in East Africa. There, she was often described as caring, warm-hearted and blessed with common sense. Gert always treasured the many friendships she had made throughout her life. Her friendship with Father Mike Pierce, M.M from the time they were together in the Kowak Mission until his death in 1989 was indeed special in her life.

Gert returned to Maryknoll in 1974 to serve as Staff in the Mission Institute. In preparation for the 1978 General Assembly, she was appointed a member of GATAF the Assembly's Preparatory Assembly committee. After the Assembly, she returned to Tanzania in 1979 where she became the head of the Catechetical Department in Musoma Diocese. Gert was once again working alongside many of the Immaculate Heart Sisters she had helped to train earlier. She remained in Musoma until 1988 when she went to Nairobi, Kenya to teach Theology and Catechetics to African Seminarians and Sisters.



Sister Gertrude Maley  
1926 – 2013

Throughout her life, Gert was a prolific reader and loved learning. She kept abreast of the latest in her fields of Theology and Catechetics as well as the Enneagrams and she welcomed friends to browse through her overstuffed bookcase and borrow whatever they wished. She will always be remembered for her generosity, sharing whatever she had. Many noted how her gift-giving was always something special for the recipient.

Gert responded again to the needs in the Mission Institute and in 1993 became Co-Director along with Father John Conway, MM. It was during her years there that Gert took time to write the following thoughts for her own obituary:

"I don't remember what I wrote on my application form, but I'm sure it was an attempt to be pious and to fulfill what I was told those 'big' people at Maryknoll expected to hear from a young woman asking to join. I knew not too much what it was all about but I did know that for some reason I was pulled, drawn, enticed to be a 'missionary' and in the Maryknoll mode. Many years in Africa, the many, many friends there, have helped me to grow and learn much about living and loving. I went expecting to DO great things, monumental things. In my goings and comings, I learned that the greatest thing I could do is help people preserve the goodness of their humanity for therein lies the beauty of God. What has given me joy is not that I have begun things, or ended things, or helped programs or schools or groups. The joy is that I myself learned that I must dance and help others dance. I must laugh and help others laugh. If my life as a Maryknoller has enabled one or two to laugh, to dance, to be joyful I believe within that JOY the life of God is active and therein the love of God will be heard and learned and it will grow."

Along with singing and dancing Gert also enjoyed movies and even Broadway plays when she was back in New York. Her joyful spirit continued to be alive in her later years in Maryknoll Residential Care.

Lynda Giordano, RN, MSN, Co-Director Adult Day Health Care Program wrote when they heard of Gert's death: "In the early days Sister Gertrude would often speak in detail about her father and his years of service on the police force. Although confused at times, she was able to convey stories of her early family years that enabled us to have a description and a feeling for her background and her life events, which were so important to her. One could also glimpse portions of her mission life through her stories and many mornings the staff would be greeted in Swahili when taking her off the van. However the vision of Sister Maley dancing, in the early years she was at Morningside is one that enabled us to see her true spirit and brought joy to us, as it must have done to many others in preceding years....she brought something special to our day care program and will be greatly missed."

Maureen Cohn, Gert's only niece of whom she was so very fond, is unable to be here but we are happy to have her cousins and friends with us today.

We welcome Father Edward Dougherty, Superior General of the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers, who will celebrate with us the Liturgy of Christian Burial.

Peace and Blessings,



Sister Patricia Gallogly, MM  
(for Sisters at the Center who shared life with Gert)

Messages of condolence may be sent to:  
Maureen and Walter Cohn  
1132 Shawnee Trail  
Carrollton, TX 75007