

The Maryknoll Sisters Center

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The Congregation of the Maryknoll Sisters was established in 1912, and sent its first group of missionaries abroad in 1921. This group of pioneers reached Hong Kong in November 1921, and began Maryknoll's missionary enterprise in faraway lands. Since then, Maryknoll Sisters have been serving in many places outside the United States — Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Africa, Eastern Europe, South and Latin Americas, etc. Maryknoll is a *world mission*, currently with Sisters in about thirty countries worldwide.

Maryknoll was the first American community of nuns founded for the purpose of overseas missionary work. Its creation, mission, and vision were ground-breaking. From the beginning, Maryknoll has stressed the need to know about other peoples, to be aware of happenings elsewhere, and



The final resting place of Mother Mary Joseph Rogers, founder of the Maryknoll Congregation

The main building and the inner court



to engage in cross-cultural exchanges. The present rule is that a Maryknoll Sister, after completing her training, has to serve at least ten years outside her homeland. Maryknoll Sisters have come from different countries — the United States, Canada, those in Africa, and Asia. Maryknoll has always been concerned about international issues and problems.

The Maryknoll Sisters Center (Ossining, NY) is the headquarters of the Maryknoll Congregation. The train-ride from Grand Central in New York City to Ossining is about forty minutes; from Ossining Station to Maryknoll, it is only a five-minute taxi-ride. The "brain" and the "heart" of the congregation, the Maryknoll Sisters Center is full of activities, visitors (besides the nuns), and laughter.

In the Center, there are Maryknoll Sisters who are on active service, with their positions, offices, and responsibilities. They are in charge of policy-making, public relations, missionary education, fund-raising, etc. There are also visitors (usually in groups) who come and go throughout the year — for example, Sisters of other congregations attending the Mission Institute program, lay missionaries and affiliates preparing themselves for overseas work, lay employees, and friends of Maryknoll.



The Maryknoll Sisters Center; the main building

Some Maryknoll Sisters spend their retirement years in the Center — they go to Mass everyday, enjoy the company of visitors, meet new people, and organize themselves into groups with regular activities. Sisters Mary Lou Martin, Doretta Leonard, and Mary Edna Brophy returned to the Center after their long service in Hong Kong — they love the community life there, and the mission stories of Sisters who went to other parts of the world.

The Maryknoll Sisters Center is situated across the road from the Maryknoll Fathers' seminary and buildings. The Center is comprised of the main building, the annex, and Rogers Building; there are also open grounds, lawns, and the cemetery. It does not take long for one to recognize the strong resemblance between the main building (especially the inner court) and the buildings of the Primary Section of Maryknoll Convent School. In fact, the Primary School buildings were modeled on the Sisters' main building, which was built in the 1930s! Outside the main building, there are apple trees, and deer sometimes come by; there are also squirrels and rabbits.

The Center has many facilities — the library, seminar rooms, TV rooms, music rooms, computer rooms, a small gym, coffee places on every floor of the buildings, dining rooms, kitchens, guest rooms, etc. There are chapels on the upper floors, and the main chapel is near the entrance of the main building. There is also the nursing home for retired Sisters.

Since its creation, Maryknoll has sided with the poor, the oppressed, and the needy. Not only does it speak out against injustices at home, Maryknoll has made known its positions on world issues. For information about Maryknoll's history, the Sisters' work in the U.S. and abroad, the Center's ongoing activities, and ways to donate, please visit the website: <http://home.maryknoll.org/index.php?module=MKA> articles. You can become a sponsor and donate online; you can also subscribe to *Maryknoll Magazine*.