

Quixote Center Director Views Central America

Nearly 75 Sisters resident at St. Joseph's Infirmary heard a rare eyewitness account of a recent journey through several Central American countries, and in the process heard an analysis of conditions there from a major spokesperson on the left.

Sister Maureen Fiedler, a native of Lockport, is co-director of the Quixote Center, the Hyattsville, Md., institution which is challenging the Reagan administration's assertions (and also some Church assertions) on Central American questions.

Sister Maureen spoke to the Sisters, many of whom have engaged in an apostolate of letter-writing through Amnesty International's Urgent Action Network, on her experiences as part of the Women's Co-



SISTER MAUREEN

alition to Stop U.S. Intervention in Central America.

The Sister of Loreto's most graphic descriptions came during her discussion of life in El Salvador, which she

characterized as a "terrorized society."

She said she spoke to people living in "an open yard" on archdiocesan property. The group gathered there is known as "The Mothers of the Disappeared."

She said she met one woman who had lost six members of her family, who herself was captured and tortured by government forces, who amputated one of her breasts and shot her in the legs. "She looked 60 and she was only a little over 40," Sister Maureen said. "And every mother in that yard had the same story."

She said she talked to many women there, some acknowledgedly "political" prisoners, who tell much the same tale. She said they told her it is "routine" for a woman to be tortured and raped when apprehended by government security forces.

A refugee camp on the grounds of the archdiocesan seminary houses 900 people, she said, 700 of whom are children.

It is the one safe spot for them, she said. "Literally, if they left the yard they would be killed."

Figures supplied her from Maria Julia Hernandez of the archdiocesan Human Rights Office indicate that between 37,000 and 40,000 people have been killed since 1979, all of them non-battle casualties, she said.

"It is wanton civilian murder. And no one, not one, has ever been tried for it," she said.



Sister Maureen fields questions from the floor.

Gasps were heard throughout the room as Sister Maureen related her tale.

"The U.S. is in the business of supporting that government," she said. "We are funding that government."

She asserted that of the civilian deaths, "98 percent are murders of the people by the government. It is a miniscule amount by the guerrillas."

"Members of (U.S.) Congress need to hear it's time to cut off the aid to El Salvador."

"Of course there's a war going on," she said. But she asserted that "no amount of aid to the Salvadoran army will help it win" the conflict.

Sister Maureen, however, made evident her admiration for the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, a government which, she said, "has the overwhelming support of its people."

"Well why? Because the government is solving some of the key problems of this region."

She cited literacy levels and food and land distribution.

She later acknowledged tensions in the Church over the new government established after the ouster of dictator Alberto Somoza.

The Sandinista government has priests in several key posts, and the Church itself there is divided in its attention to hierarchical structure, a fact displeasing to Pope John Paul II. In addition there is serious concern in both Church and human rights circles over government treatment of Miskito Indians in the country.

Sister Maureen's major concern, however, is that "the CIA is funding the 'Contras,' a group de-

dedicated to the overthrow of the government which several experts say contains a number of dictator Somoza's old security forces.

She said that the charge of Marxism leveled against the Nicaraguan government by its detractors simply does not pertain.

She said that the common Nicaraguan view is that the Sandinista revolution is a "Christian revolution." She quoted one of her interviewees there as saying that the Gospel presence of Jesus was with the poor and least of society and "our leaders are with the poor and least of the people."

The government of Nicaragua, she said, "has nothing to do with atheism."

And of it all, "It's a wonderful thing to see."

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Silently Witness the Good News

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 5:13-16. (R1) Is. 58:7-10. (R2) 1 Cor. 2:1-5. One thing a Christian should never have is an identity crisis. With neon clarity Christ said, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world." No fuzziness there.

These metaphors right off tell us two things: first, that society is corrupt and darksome, for you don't salt living things or use light in the daytime; secondly, that the Christian can save society by preventing corruption in print, in TV, movies, politics, and by shedding abroad the light of gospel truth.

Salt is a wonderful thing! King Lear told one of his daughters, "I love you like salt." She felt slighted until fish and eggs were served her without salt. Salt seasons, flavors, makes foods savory. It preserves from corruption. Applied to persons, salt designates sharpness, witness, zest, enthusiasm.

The Christian can be salt for life for him is purposeful. Purpose gives romance to life. It is when we know where we are going and how to get there, that there can be joy in the going. The Christian's life, therefore, should sparkle, be enthusiastic, joyous and jolly. When England was a land of faith, it was a "merry England." When Christ was born, it is still a "merry Christmas."

The Christian must bring joy and excitement to society, because he has the light of truth. What a happy warrior G.K. Chesterton was! He had a zest for life, a joy of living, enthusiasm par excellence because he had faith. He himself wrote: "The one object of the

cross of Christ/ Go gaily in the dark... Do you have joy without a cause, Yea faith without a hope?" For him, it was the modern pagan who knew only sadness. "Their gods were sadder than the sea, Gods of a wandering will." When the will can wander everywhere and nowhere, how can there be naught but sadness - a sickening satiety?

And it is the world that must be the object of the Christian's evangelization. The prophets were sent to but one people. The Christian is sent to the whole, wide world. The Christian exists for others, not for himself. He is chosen, not for privilege, but for mission. A light is not lit for itself but that it might enable others to move about, to live!

Paul VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* spoke of evangelization, of being salt and light to others as a daily task. Urgently, he calls upon the faithful to become living witnesses.

"Take a Christian," he said, "or a handful of Christians, let them show their understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other peoples, their oneness with the efforts of all others espousing anything noble and good. Let them radiate in simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values and their hope in something that is not seen. Through this wordless witness, those Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live. Questions like, 'Why are they like this?' 'Why do they live this way?' 'What or who inspires them?' 'Why are they in our midst?'"

Light makes no noise when it shines; salt makes no sound when it seasons. Such a witnessing is being salt and light, a silent but effective proclamation of the good news, the first step in evangelization!



SERIES - presenting feature and documentary films from around the world depicting some of the cultures encountered in the museum exhibition "Face to Face" is continuing with the film "Windwalker" 1:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 12 followed by a demonstration of Plains Indian beading techniques at Rochester Museum and Science Center auditorium. Free with general museum admission.

WORLD TRAVEL - "Discover Portugal, The Azores and Madeira," a film tour to the home of the world's noblest navigators, narrated by filmmaker Philip Walker, 3 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 12, Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum and Science Center. Admission \$5 (\$4.50 for members).

CLASSIC FILM - "There's No Business Like Show Business," starring Marilyn Monroe and Donald O'Connor, 2 and 8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7 Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum and Science Center. Free with general admission.

"CELESTIAL CYCLES" - New Star Show, 8 p.m., Monday, Feb. 6 through April 15, with matinees on Saturdays and Sundays at 2 and 3 p.m., Strasenburgh Planetarium.

WEEKEND PROGRAM

- Of basic cross-country ski instruction 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., films in the Riedman Theatre, and 3:30 p.m., staff-led snowshoe hikes, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., and ox drawn sleigh rides for children 1:30 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays, RMSC Cummins Nature Center, Gullick Road south of Honeyoye, N.Y.

KILBOURN HALL - Collegium Musicum, Paul O'Dette, director, 8 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 2, free; Kilbourn Concert, Jan DeGaetano, mezzo-soprano, presenting music of Martin, Gilbert, Ravel, Powell and Faure, 8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7. Tickets available at Eastman School Ticket Office.

PHILHARMONIA - David Efron, conducting music of Dvorak, Menotti and Mussorgsky, 8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 3, Eastman Theatre. Free.

AT NAZARETH - "Colored People's Time" - a musical panorama depicting dramatic and humorous aspects of black life from the Civil War to the dawn of the civil rights movement, 8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 3, main auditorium. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for students. The Children's Theater Program mini-series presents "The Mimeworkshop" featuring Eliot Mintushel, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., small auditorium. Tickets \$1, on sale one hour before each performance. Events at Nazareth Arts Center.

MEMORIAL ART GALLERY - Presents a family workshop featuring teacher and poet Dale

Davis conducting "Translations," which focuses on translating not only from one language to another but from one art form to another, 1:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 5. Admission is free to members; free to non-members with gallery admission: Showing of director Jean Cocteau's classic interpretation of "Beauty and the Beast" 3 p.m., Sunday Feb. 5. Free admission for members; free to non-members with gallery admission: Lecture by Jonathan E. Ericson, assistant professor in social ecology, University of California at Irving, on "Science in Archaeology: New Strategies and Directions," 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7, auditorium. Free. All events at Memorial Art Gallery.

OPERA THEATRE - Of Rochester presents "Talking Without Words," featuring costumed singers in scenes from "The Magic Flute," "Don Giovanni," and "The Marriage of Figaro" as part of the RMSC's Theatre For Children (And Parents Too!) series, 2 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 4, Eisenhart Auditorium. Tickets available at Eisenhart Box Office one hour before showtime.

SENIOR MATINEE - "Gigi" starring Leslie Caron, Maurice Chevalier, 1:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 2, George Eastman House.

NFP - Informational session, sponsored by Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, 7:30-9 p.m., Monday,

Feb. 6, St. Mary's Hospital, east auditorium. **WORKSHOP** - The Rochester Area Reading Council is hosting a Newspaper in Education workshop for elementary and secondary teachers from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 11, at Schroeder High School, 875 Ridge Road in Webster. Keynote address will be by Dr. Nicholas Criscuolo, supervisor of Reading, New Haven, Connecticut schools. To register call Dr. Gerald Begy, State University College at Brockport, 395-2585.

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