

tion and loss, there it was: new life coming forth phoenix-like. I can only imagine the continued renewal that has taken place over the past 20+ years.

To be clear, the loss of a single loved one is plenty enough to break a heart. The tallies from war are grim but the abstractness becomes crystal clear when a memorial star is affixed to our home or a neighbor's.

And then there are those gigantic tragedies—tsunamis or Haitian earthquakes or genocidal events that destroy hundreds of thousands of lives. That's why we need the rebirth seen at Mount St. Helens, to buoy us in our grief, to put a comma after death instead of a period. In everyday parlance, Easter nails it: He is risen!

The Resurrection is God's response to the sorrow of death and loss. Whether our pain emanates from a devastated landscape or human heart, God comforts us with the promise that there is much more in store for us than the passing joys of this world. If the God of nature can bring forth life from volcanic devastation, how much more can God do for us.

For me the new life generated on the terrain of that cataclysmic event speaks of the hope of Easter. May that hope touch your heart as we commemorate the core of our Faith. Thank you for all you do to support our Glenmary ministry.

HAPPY EASTER!

OPPOSITE: Sun shines on Mount St. Helens in Skamania County, Washington. Photo by Jaser Cervantes.

GLENMARY NEWS & NOTES

Glenmary speaks to United Nations

INFLUENCE / Glenmary brings Catholic perspective to discussion

When the 56th session of the United Nation's Commission for Social Development met early in 2018, it had 17 ambitious goals. To name a few, it would like to end poverty and world hunger, while promoting good health and well-being, as well as quality education—and all this by 2030.

Glenmary Father John S. Rausch was a panelist at a side event at the U.N. organized by the Congregations of St. Joseph to offer Catholic input to the commission. Father John represented Appalachia and the rural South of the United States, where poverty is often overlooked by outsiders.

"As a person of faith," Father John said, "I recognize that Jesus associated with the downtrodden and those excluded in society. I am committed to a preferential option for the poor. As an economist, I know there exist enough material goods for everyone to live a decent life."

Glenmary Father John S. Rausch holds up an map of Appalachia during a side event at the United Nations. Given the relative prosperity of the United States, many forget this region remains impoverished.

Photo by Franciscans Intl.
Br. Christian Seno, OFM



Father John shared that poverty in Appalachia doesn't mean starvation, but "a lack of options, shorter lifespans and psychological feelings of inferiority."

Lastly, panelists were asked for their advice in eradicating poverty.

"Eliminating poverty is so daunting," he said. "It's like we're in a leaky canoe in a swift current with toothbrushes for paddles. Headed over the falls, we raise our hands in prayer, and then spot a low hanging branch that we grab for safety. The branch bends and we find ourselves on shore. We burst out laughing knowing we escaped disaster and God is smiling on us. My advice in your work for justice, is catch the next low hanging branch, and do it with a smile. Laughter is key to development work."