



Miriam Therese MacGillis, O.P.

Miriam Therese MacGillis is a member of the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell, New Jersey. She lives and works at Genesis Farm, which she co-founded in 1980 with the sponsorship of her Dominican congregation.

Miriam received her Masters in Art from the University of Notre Dame and has taught art at the high school and college levels. In 1973, she became coordinator of Peace and Justice Education for the Newark Archdiocese. In 1976 she joined the staff of Global Education Associates as program coordinator and art editor of their publication, "The Whole Earth Papers".

Miriam describes Genesis Farm as a learning center where people of good will are welcome to search for more authentic ways to live in harmony with the natural world and each other. The farm practices Biodynamic methods of agriculture, which are in tune with the natural rhythms of Earth. It was one of the early pioneers in converting to Community-Supported Agriculture, (CSA), a movement which has expanded across the country. Presently, nearly 300 families from the region are shareholders in its economic base. Miriam also coordinates programs exploring the work of author and geologist, Thomas Berry, as he has interpreted the New Cosmology. An Earth Literacy program at Genesis Farm offers accreditation for both graduate and undergraduate students.

Miriam describes herself as having been formed by the three rivers which have shaped the regions of New Jersey where she has lived her life. She was born and lived her first 17 years in Bayonne, a small industrial city, separated from Manhattan by the Hudson River as it moves through its estuaries across the sweep of New York Harbor. When she was 7 years old, her family began to clear a home-site in a heavily wooded area along the Musconetcong River in what was then a rural and sparsely settled region of northwestern New Jersey. On weekends and throughout the summer, they worked together to build a small cabin, and Miriam's childhood was deeply influenced by summers spent in the forests and fields of that watershed and the challenges of living for years with neither water nor electricity. Since 1980, she has lived along the Paulinskill River as it flows through the same watershed on its way to the upper Delaware River. Genesis Farm takes its place within a community of people and organizations working to preserve the wildlife, farms and rural communities of this highly threatened region.

Miriam lectures extensively, and has conducted workshops in the US, Canada, Europe, Asia and the Pacific.

In 2005, Miriam was presented with the Thomas Berry Award by the Center for Respect for Life and the Environment, and in 2007 was named among the planet's top 15 green religious leaders by Grist magazine.