

# PADRE MIGUEL



A MEMOIR OF MY CATHOLIC MISSIONARY  
EXPERIENCE IN BOLIVIA AMIDST POSTCOLONIAL  
TRANSFORMATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

MICHAEL  
GILLGANNON

PADRE MIGUEL

Michael Gillgannon

When Father Michael J. Gillgannon, known as "Padre Miguel," left for Bolivia in 1974, he thought he would complete a five-year stint of mission and return to the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Little did he realize how fascinated and involved he would become social struggles that were changing everyday life and the Catholic Church.

In this book, "Padre Miguel" shares stories about his work alongside the people of Bolivia and his encounters with teachers, artists, theologians, and others. The Parish of San Antonio de Padua in the Andes comes alive when he describes the colorful annual celebration of life, community, and faith. The parish school grows, and its youth encourage him to initiate campus ministry at the State university of La Paz.

At age 79, Father Gillgannon returned to Kansas City. There, through engagement with Hispanic Ministry in the United States, he continued to raise ethical questions and to work for social change.

"Father Gillgannon's book is a personal reflection on the experience of transformation that can happen when one leaves one's home country and immerses oneself in another country and its culture. After some forty years of living in La Paz, Bolivia and sharing the life of the people, he is not the same person who arrived in 1974 at the La Paz, Bolivia airport. Experiences and events opened his eyes and heart to another way of life, to another way of being in pastoral ministry. His experience of living for several decades in a culture not his own brought him deep personal growth as a human being and as a pastor. This experience brought to life his studies and commitment to justice and peace and equality among peoples."

Sister Joan Mury, Maryknoll Sisters

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