

Will the world really end in December 2012?

Mary Ann McGivern | Mar. 28, 2012 NCR Today

I have been [accompanying Sister Gloria on an east coast tour of Loretto works](#) [1]. It is part of our celebration with our sister community in Guatemala of Loretto's 200th birthday.

Gloria has led two groups in a Mayan candle ceremony, and she has described to them and to yet a third group the significance of the end of the Mayan calendar.

She says in Guatemala, there are more than 20 indigenous groups, each with its own traditional language, customs and dress. However, what they all have in common is the Mayan ancestry.

The ancient Mayans were good observers of space. They studied the movement of the planets and the stars. They invented various calendars to measure time. The calendar that dominated then is called *la gran historia*, or the great history. It measured out 5,125 years.

This Mayan calendar completes its cycle in 2012. Some people think that with the end of this Mayan calendar signifies the end of the world. (At this point in Gloria's presentation, which she gave in Spanish and an interpreter translated, many in the audience laughed nervously.)

But on the contrary, in accord with the Mayan culture, in the course of this time, the earth and humanity will be renewed. Instead of destruction, there will be renewal. The Mayans see the date Dec. 21, 2012 as a triumph of the sun over the darkness of the night.

The completion of the calendar is compared to the rebirth of a new sun and the beginning of a new era. This date is a significant spiritual event and symbolic for all of humanity. The Mayans believe that this new age will bring justice, transparency and a greater understanding of the spiritual world.

The new Mayan cycle is a time to initiate or begin a renewal and to live with the hope of a better world.

This is Gloria's teaching and in myself and in the groups we are with, I feel a sense of hope that we can make a new beginning.

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[1] <http://ncronline.org/node/29544>