

Family of Friends

JULY 2004

*To seek out
and
advocate
for the poor
and needy,
especially
families,
for the
Kingdom
of God.*



Celebrating Vocations
...Community Life
...Prayer & Spirituality
...Compassionate Service
...Shared Vision



Individually and as a Community we have been blessed by our vocations. For a thoughtful and interesting article please see "A Contemporary Look at Vocations." We rejoice in the life we have chosen.



President's Message



"Your love, dear brothers and sisters, has brought me great joy and much encouragement! You have cheered the hearts of all of God's people."

Phm 1:7

July 2004



Dear Friends,

I believe an axiom for life is that in the midst of challenging times there is always something to rejoice about and celebrate if we only look. And as I look at the past few months, there is much to be thankful for and celebrate:

- Our eight Jubilarians, whose fidelity to their call to religious life, is a sign of grace to all of us.*
- The many institutes of the Young Ladies Institute (YLI) who have made contributions to the Sisters of the Holy Family and to numerous religious congregations to help support their retired Sisters as a result of the action taken by YLI Grand President, Barbara Lovio, who adopted as her program for 2004, "Sisters Helping Sisters."*
- Linda Micciche, who brings her skills and many talents to direct our Development Department in support of our ministries and projects.*
- All of you who so faithfully respond to the needs of children and families by partnering with us in prayer, ministry, and support.*

How could we, as Sisters of the Holy Family, not be thankful and celebrate such blessings?

You and your loved ones are in our prayers daily as we each strive to respond to God's call in our lives.

God bless you.

Sister Sharon Flannigan

Sister Sharon Flannigan



Development Department News

Welcome

In April, Sisters of the Holy Family welcomed Linda Micciche to her new position as Director of Development for Sisters of the Holy Family. Linda has a Masters in Non-Profit Administration and a Development Director Certificate from the University of San Francisco. Previously Linda worked in social services, professional associations and community radio.

Car Donation Information

Did you know that if you live in Chicago, New York or Los Angeles or anywhere in-between—including the San Francisco Bay Area—and want to donate a vehicle to the Sisters, you can?

Did you know that for every car donated, the Sisters receive a contribution that helps fund important ministries?

The Sisters of the Holy Family perform essential ministries including early childhood and parenting education; religious education in parishes with children, youth and adults; assisting people who are homeless or in prison; and teaching at a school for the blind.

Sisters serve as hospital chaplains, counselors for families, and attend to the needs of migrants and immigrants. Sisters work with the mentally and physically challenged, help prepare people for citizenship, teach ESL and adult literacy, and stand in countless lines to assist people to fill out forms and help them understand the workings of SSI or INS processes. Sisters organize groups to assist people through times of bereavement, visit the homebound, and work in soup kitchens.

Do you think any or all of this work is important? Did you answer yes? If so, and you have an old jalopy (or a reasonably nice car), running or not, in your garage or driveway—maybe it's just waiting to be turned into funding to help the Sisters make good on their mission statement *"to seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families, for the Kingdom of God."*

Call us at 510-624-4580 today and just say "I want to donate a car." Within three days your car will be scheduled for pickup and you not only get the tax deduction for your next tax season, you get the satisfaction of helping many worthy ministries, which the Sisters work tirelessly on each day.

Mother's Day Brunch

Was a great success! The gardens were beautiful, the weather was pleasant, and the smiling faces of the many families and children who attended were evidence of everyone having a great time!

The Sisters wish to express a very special thank you to Veena Roesler of Palmdale Estates and to the many others who contributed goods and services to make this event such a great success. Many of our guests commented on the delicious food and the beautiful environment and expressed how much they look forward to coming each Mother's Day.

HELP THE SISTERS HELP THE POOR AND NEEDY • DONATE YOUR CAR

Sisters of the Holy Family are excited to announce that we are now able to accept nearly all donations of cars, trucks, trailers, boats and RVs!

Most vehicles are accepted — running or not.

Vehicles can be picked up throughout the continental United States and Hawaii.

Free towing and free appraisal — there is absolutely no cost to you.

To make a contribution, simply call our Development Office — within three business days, you will be contacted to make arrangements for pickup.

Receive a full fair-market value tax deduction.

Free Nationwide Pickup • Quick Response • No Cost To You

Call today: 510-624-4580
(SHF Development Office)



"...to seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families, for the kingdom of God."

Jubilarians 2004



**SISTER M. JOANNA
CONNOLLY**

I am grateful for 90 years of life begun in a loving and faith filled family and enriched in the supportive community of Holy Family Sisters to which God has called me.



**SISTER M. MALACHY
HANNIGAN**

Gratitude for all the Sisters who have encouraged me in my prayer life, in my work in the kitchen (a labor of love). "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me."



**SISTER M. AGNES
GOUGH**

I am grateful for being a part of the Community and to be able to carry on with the work I love so much in the spirit and vision of our founders.



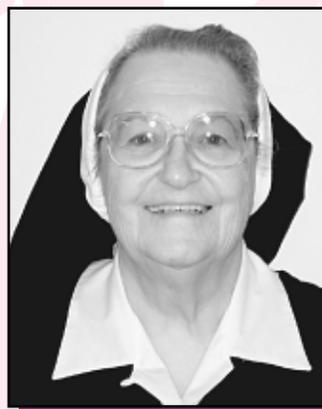
**SISTER M. JANE
MAST**

The graciousness of the Lord in itself, and manifested by Community, family and friends, has sustained me.



**SISTER KATHRYN
MORROW**

I have been sustained for the past 60 years by the conviction that God called me to be a Sister of the Holy Family, that in my vocation I would find love, joy, peace and would best be able to contribute my part to make the world a better place for all God's children.



**SISTER M. STEPHEN
SMARIO**

My prayer life, especially the Eucharist, the support of my family, and friends and Community, has sustained me throughout the years.



**SISTER MARIANNE
SMITH**

I am most grateful for all the blessings God has bestowed on me throughout my life: my wonderful parents, sisters and brothers, who always loved and supported me, and all the wonderful Sisters I have met and loved, and dear, dear friends of many years.



**SISTER M. SHARON
MELLO**

I am most grateful for my family, my Community, and the people with whom I have been in contact through my ministry; they never cease to inspire me. The Eucharist sustains me.

A Contemporary Look at Vocations

As the Sisters of the Holy Family celebrated with our Jubilarians and reflected on what attracted us to and continues to sustain us in this Community, I, as Vocation Director, was asked to reflect upon what attracts and sustains newer members. My thoughts on this question are drawn from my experience as Vocation Director for our Community and my experiences in the Oakland Diocesan Vocation Office and as a member of the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) board member.

We cannot deny the reality that there continues to be fewer people entering religious life. Therefore, it is hard to adequately answer what is attracting and sustaining newer members. For me, the clue lies in learning from young adults themselves. Studies continue to show that approximately 75 percent of young adults say that they pray, that they attend some religious services during the year, and that they discuss religion/spirituality with their friends. My own experience of working with young adults confirms that they are seeking a balance in their lives which includes community, spirituality and service. The elements of our lifestyle are present in what they are seeking. Young adults are also open to discussion on life choices, vocations and discernment skills. The best attended events offered by vocation directors are those which include opportunities to develop discernment skills. The following quote from the Five Year Strategic Plan for the NRVC Working Document speaks volumes of the reality of young adults today:

“To be frank, the ‘vocation crisis’ in North America is not just limited to consecrated life and an ordained ministry. In the United States sociologists estimate that one out of two marriages end in divorce. Others speculate that it may be even higher with negligible difference between Catholics and non-Catholics. Although the validity of permanent commitment is questioned in the midst of this reality, clearly people seem to be making poor life choices. Our young people would benefit from learning and being exposed to the art and skills of prayerful and reflective discernment.”

Before we ask what will attract and sustain the next generation of religious, we need to ask how to address this need for a “culture of discernment.” The primary challenge given by the Third Continental Congress on Vocations was to create a “culture of vocation” within the North American Church.

WHAT EXACTLY IS A CULTURE OF VOCATION?

- It is a culture in which vocation is understood in the context of our baptismal call to holiness and service.
- It is a culture that recognizes the definition of vocation to include each person’s call by God through Baptism to live a life of love and holiness through single, married, ordained or consecrated life and to respond through service in the Church and in the world.
- It is a culture where each person is empowered to identify and respond to the mission to which she or he is called.

Creating a vocation culture means trusting that if we provide and empower people with the skills and support to make their life choice in an environment of prayer and discernment then not only will all vocations benefit, but the invitation to religious life or ordained ministry will receive a joyful and generous response.

As vocation directors, it is our desire to promote religious life as a vital and enriching lifestyle within the church. If we want young people to choose consecrated life in the future, then we must help them understand its meaning and see it as a viable choice. Catholics have fewer opportunities to know sisters, brothers and priests personally than they did in the past. History has shown that young men and women are inclined to learn more about priesthood and religious life when they have a personal relationship with priests or religious. It is certainly our “jobs” as vocation directors to help put religious life on the radar of our young people as a possible life choice, but it is not just the responsibility of vocation directors. It

is the total Church community that fosters and calls forth vocations. It is the Sisters, Brothers, Priests and Deacons themselves through relationship and sharing who they are. It is also parents, adults, and the youth themselves, who create a climate of faith, love, and reverence which nurtures vocations. We are all called to be vocation ministers for each other. This means including and being open to all vocational choices as viable options, sharing these options as possibilities, recognizing the gifts of each person, calling forth these gifts in each person, and supporting them in the process of making their vocation response. In order to create this culture of vocation, the whole Church must work together. The primary task is not so much immediate promotion or recruitment, but fidelity to a long-term process.

by Sister Kathy Littrell, SHF

Vocation Prayer

Loving God,

You speak to us and nourish us through the life of the Church community.

In the name of Jesus, we ask you to send your Spirit to us so that women and men among us will respond to your call to service and leadership in the Church.

We pray especially for those who hear your invitation to be sister, brother, or priest.

May those who are opening their hearts and minds to your call be encouraged and strengthened through our enthusiasm in your service.

Amen



Becky Battle and the Pacific Aires Ensemble.



Associate Rosemary Pacheco and her son Dave.



Food was fingerlickin' good!



Associate Esther Yee and Sister Gladys Guenther had fun serving champagne.



Families enjoyed the day with their mothers.



Servers, Rusty and Madonna Pride and Associate Jack Knowles.



Sister Marietta Fahey and her mother, Helen.



Guests at the buffet tables.

Mother's Day Brunch

The Mother's Day Brunch was a wonderful occasion for our many friends to gather and celebrate this special day. It also provided an opportunity for Linda Micciche, our new Development Director, to introduce herself to our guests.

The previous week the weather report for Mother's Day was rain. However, once again we were graced with glorious sunshine. Veena Roesler and Palmdale Estates Caterers served a delicious brunch while our guests were serenaded by Becky Battle and the Pacific Aires Ensemble. Local businessman, Abe Sousa of Sousa's Discount Liquors of Fremont, donated the champagne which was served by the Sisters and Associates. Eva Ricciarelli and Friends of Heirloom provided the exquisite roses for the centerpieces.

The event was filled with fun and laughter. Approximately \$16,000 was raised, which will be used for renovations to our Motherhouse dining room to bring about a reduction in the noise level.

Motherhouse Dining Room Needs Acoustical Alterations

We have for several years talked among ourselves about the high volume of sound in the dining room at the Motherhouse. Now you may think that this would be inevitable when on many occasions you have 100 plus people in this space, but it is also true when you have only 40 to 50 people in the room.

We asked a sound expert to make some suggestions and to offer us a proposal on alterations to the dining room for sound abatement. The dining room is long with numerous windows and flat walls, as well as hard table-top surfaces - all contributing to the bouncing of sound from speakers to walls to windows to table-tops.

We have not received a formal proposal as yet. However, our consultant did tell us that some Maxon panels for the walls, table mats and window treatment will greatly reduce the sound and create an attractive and pleasant atmosphere in the dining room.

The proceeds from our Mother's Day Brunch have been earmarked for the dining room to help defray the costs involved for the above improvements. We will also be looking to foundations for grants.





THE EARTH CHARTER: A Blueprint for Hope

by Associate Shaun Peterson, Sisters of the Holy Family

“We stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history, a time when humanity must choose its future... it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.”

Earth Charter Preamble

Those profound words captured the attention of the Sisters and Associates, and for some time now they have been exploring *The Earth Charter* in its entirety. The Charter is the result of a 12 year long process with worldwide experts and representatives of grass-roots communities. They explored common values and goals to shape a sustainable world, based on respect for nature, universal human rights and a culture of peace. In 1987, The United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development asked that a Charter draft be undertaken; its approval was finalized by the Earth Charter Commission in March 2000. Currently, there is a movement inviting individuals and organizations in all sectors of society to learn, live, affirm and endorse the Charter’s principles as a blueprint to building a more humane and peaceful world.

Following a year-long process of education and dialogue, the Sisters of the Holy Family, during their June community gathering, chose to add their name to the list of endorsers of the Earth Charter. The Sisters of the Holy Family and their Associates identify with the fundamental principles and values of the Earth Charter. They commit themselves to deepen their understanding of these principles and to work with others to build a “more just, sustainable and peaceful society.”



A NEW AWARENESS

Sisters and Associates share their experiences after implementing some of the Charter’s principles:

“Labels on products have more importance. Now I look for ‘FAIR TRADE, SUSTAINABLE, or ORGANIC’ on food package...”

Associate Gloria Gonzales

“We can live in ways with less impact on the Earth and still live well...”

Associate Pat Moran

“One question God will ask us is, ‘Did you enjoy my world?’ Organic products seem to be involved with my answer somehow.”

Sister Patricia Wittman

“I have introduced the Earth Charter to two groups...and both have responded favorably.”

Sister Elaine Marie Sanchez

Our commitment continues:

“As a Congregation, we challenge ourselves to become personally aware of, and extend to others, the vision of a just and sustainable future for all creation.”

Sisters of the
Holy Family



Palmdale Spectacular VII

September 12, 2004

1:00 - 5:00, Best House & Garden



Historical Presentation

By Sister Michaela O'Connor

Palmdale Estates Self-Guided Tour

Palmdale Estates has a rich history just waiting for you to discover and explore. Your program will include many interesting facts and little known anecdotes uncovered by Sister Michaela O'Connor in her work as the archivist for Sisters of the Holy Family.

Make Your Reservations Now

Palmdale Spectacular VII

Schedule of Events

- 12:45 p.m.
Welcoming & Registration
- 1:00 p.m.
Silent Auction
Bar Opens, Snacks Available
Spectacular Drawing Tickets Available
Music
- 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Historical Presentation
Self-Guided Tour of the Grounds
- 3:15 p.m.
Hors d'oeuvres. Served at Table
Live Auction
- 3:45 p.m.
Invocation
Spectacular VII Drawing
Harp Music
Dinner Served
- 5:00 p.m.
Closing

- **Tickets are \$75 per person.** (Tax deductible portion is \$45 per person.)
- **Reservations are limited, please respond by August 25.**
- **Call 510-624-4580 to reserve tickets.**
- **Payment by Mastercard, VISA or check.**

Visit our website: holyfamilysisters.org

Family of Friends

Published by Sisters of the Holy Family of Fremont, California to inform our friends of the activities of the Congregation and to honor our generous donors.

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