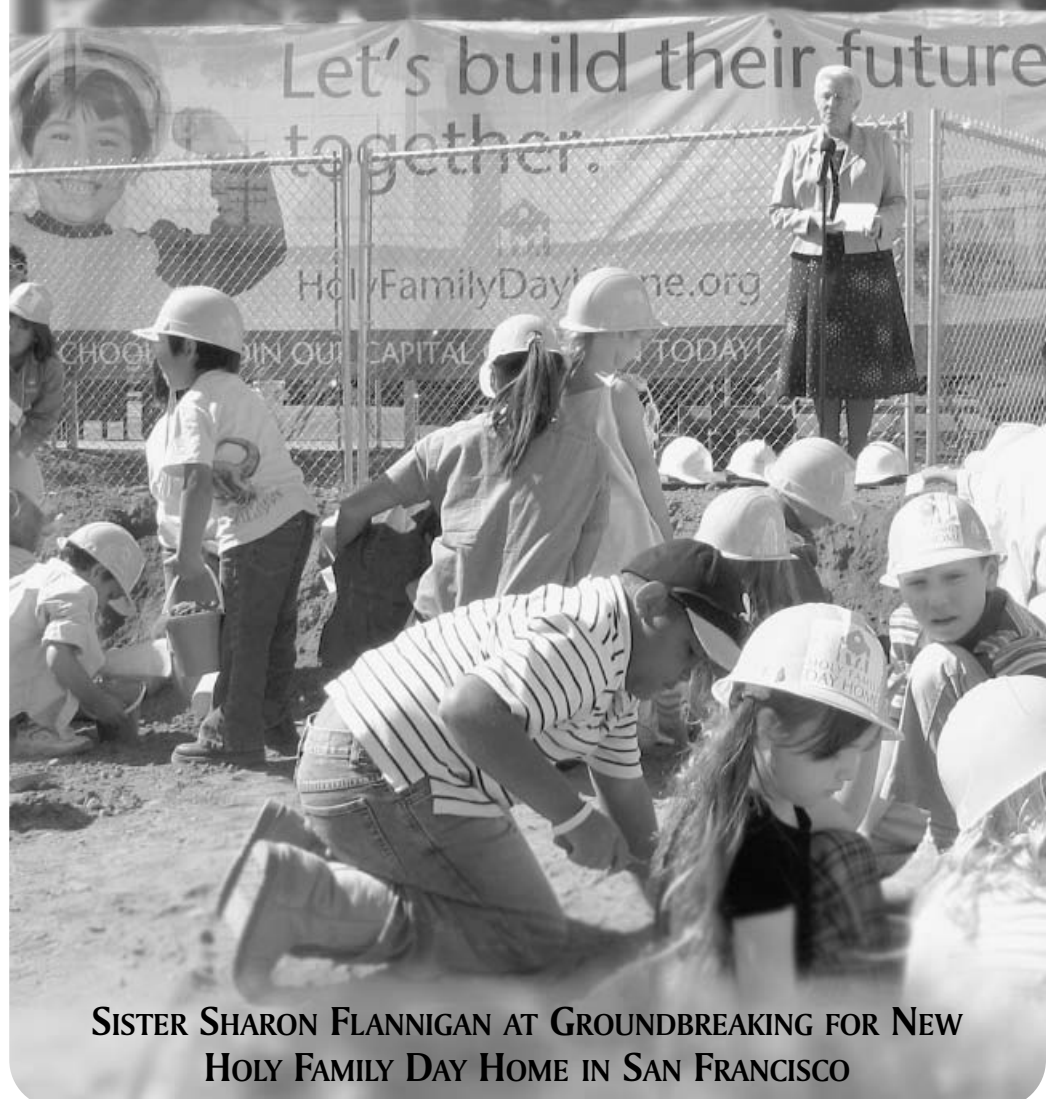


# *Family of Friends*

MARCH 2006

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

## **2005 ANNUAL REPORT: BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION OF OUR PAST**



**SISTER SHARON FLANNIGAN AT GROUNDBREAKING FOR NEW  
HOLY FAMILY DAY HOME IN SAN FRANCISCO**

# President's Message



***"How admirable a thing it would be to devote one's whole life to others, to live for them, to work for them, to die in their service."***

Mother Dolores Armer, Foundress

Dear Friends,

In this issue of *Family of Friends*, it is our desire to share with you a sampling of the ministries the Sisters are engaged in.

The opening quote from our foundress, Mother Dolores, sets the framework for the mission of the Sisters. The needs of today have broadened the spectrum of ministries from those of our founding. However, what remains constant, as you will read in the articles by the Sisters, is the deep love and concern they have for those they "work with."

Several of the Sisters you will read about are "retired" – Sisters Marjorie Wakelin, Karen Stern, Margarite Apostolo, Jacinta Fiebig and Mercedes Braga. It is not retirement as we ordinarily think about it. This is retirement "Holy Family style" as we take to heart the words of Mother Dolores.

I thank all of our Sisters and Associates for the inspiration they are to me and each other. And I thank you for being a part of our "Family of Friends."

God bless you.

*Sister Sharon Flannigan*

Sister Sharon Flannigan  
Congregational President

# Groundbreaking for New Day Home

On a beautiful and unexpectedly warm fall day in San Francisco, Holy Family Day Home brought together more than 300 people from throughout the greater Bay Area for a long-awaited groundbreaking celebration.

Founded by the Sisters of the Holy Family, the original Holy Family Day Home in the Mission District opened in 1911. For more than 80 years, the Day Home provided a nurturing and comprehensive education to more than 14,000 vulnerable children in a beautiful building on the historic corner of 16th and Dolores Streets. However, 16 seconds after the 1989 earthquake struck nearby Mt. Loma Prieta, it shuddered through the Mission District, and resulted in the closing of this “home away from home” for so many Bay Area families. Children and staff quickly relocated to a smaller building on the site, and even added two temporary modular units, but enrollment had to be reduced by one-third, or 50 families.

Shortly after this sad event, the Sisters of the Holy Family transitioned their operations to a lay Board of Directors and staff. However, the Sisters’ commitment to the care of the whole child, their tradition of service to the family, their spirit of loving care, and their unrelenting advocacy for the poor, continues to provide the deep, steady undercurrent for the educational mission of the current Day Home. Holy Family Day Home is one of the largest providers of early education services to low-income and homeless families in the Bay Area and is one of only a small handful of such facilities to have earned full accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Even though another generation of children continues to thrive and comprehensive services to their families continue to grow, the Day Home has struggled for more than 16 years to demolish the damaged building, design a new facility for 150 children, and raise the funds to build it. In November of 2004, the Day Home embarked on a \$7.1 million Capital Campaign to construct 15,000 additional square feet of enriched learning space. The event on October 8, 2005 was the culmination and celebration of these efforts.

Children of Holy Family Day Home and their families broke ground for the construction and were joined in their efforts by many dignitaries, including Sister Sharon Flannigan, President of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family; Phil Marineau, the CEO of Levi Strauss and a member of the Day Home Board; Charles A. Fracchia, the Historian of the City of San Francisco; and many board members including the Co-Chairs of the Capital Campaign, Tom Bonomi and Marie Hurabiell. The Office of Mayor Gavin Newsom, Supervisor Bevan Dufty, and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi provided proclamations, including one that announced that October 8, 2005 was Holy Family Home Day in San Francisco! Many alum and Day Home staff were also in attendance at this very special event, hosted by Donna M. Cahill, the Executive Director of Holy Family Day Home since September 1997.

The General Contractor is the Frank Portman Company (the late Frank Portman attended the Day Home shortly after it opened in 1911) and they expect to complete the beautiful new facility by the end of 2006! What an exciting celebration that will be, and what a wonderful way to embark on our second century of service to children and families in the Bay Area.



# Spectacular VIII

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## **SAVE THE DATE**

**Spectacular IX is  
coming sooner  
than you think!  
August 20, 2006**



**Top row: Volunteers greet guests. Sister and guests on their way to view the exhibit in the Armer house. Middle row: The silent auction displays were truly spectacular and praised by all attendees. Bottom row: Dinner and live auction were enjoyed under the tent at Spectacular VIII.**

# A Festivity to Remember

It is always very difficult to find the right words to properly and wholeheartedly say thank you to all the people who were responsible in making our Spectacular VIII event a total success.

The festive afternoon began with the silent auction, open bar, and strolling musicians to entertain our guests. Then there was a live auction under the tent, followed by a four-course dinner with wine. The net profit of Spectacular VIII was approximately \$101,000. Proceeds from this event have traditionally benefitted the Mission Fund of Sisters of the Holy Family, which supports our ministries. This year, the Board of Directors made a decision to donate 15 percent of the proceeds to Hurricane Relief. None of this could have been possible without the help and generosity of our Sponsors, Friends, Volunteers, Vendors, Associates and Sisters.

**A Spectacular Display for Spectacular VIII:** In memory of the anniversary of Sister Dolores' death, one room in Armer was dedicated to a living history museum. Sister Michaela O'Connor, our archivist, put her heart and soul into creating this wonderful display of the history of the Sisters of the Holy Family, which was enjoyed by all guests. What a wonderful job she did.

## **New This Year:**

This year we introduced two new features to our silent auction: the "Preview Day," and the "Guaranteed Bid." Preview Day allowed viewing and purchasing of the silent auction items on Saturday before the Spectacular, and Guaranteed Bid allowed guests to "buy" an item for 125 percent of its donor assessed value. Both features proved to be great ideas and we sold 54 items resulting in a \$5,000 increase in our silent auction sales this year.

*Thanks to the faithful participation and generosity of hundreds of our friends, the Sisters were able to donate \$15,150 to Hurricane Katrina Relief funds. We were pleased and excited to be able to send \$5,000 to the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans (an unrelated community); \$4,000 to the family of our Sister Suzanne Bart; and \$5,000 to the Catholic Charities of the East Bay who are helping hurricane survivors who have come to our area. (The remaining balance is yet to be distributed.)*

## **NEW ORLEANS WAS HOME**

It has been months since Katrina wreaked havoc on the South. I was born and raised in New Orleans and have a large assortment of aunts, uncles and cousins still living there. They were severely affected by Katrina. After the destruction from the winds, they were hopeful, but then the levees gave way and all was lost. Their homes, 18 in all, were flooded, some completely, others up to three feet. The water stayed for weeks and the mold, mildew, rot and swift water destroyed everything. The majority of my family left before the hurricane, but a few stayed behind. Two of my cousins, Anthony and Johnny, saw the worst of it. Anthony was in the Super Dome in New Orleans, but left because conditions were so bad. His daughter and her young baby had gone to Kenner, Louisiana, but the water rose there also. So, she put the baby on her back and walked to higher ground. Johnny could drive a boat and he was enlisted to rescue people who were in the water and those stranded on the tops of their homes. The worst of it was seeing the bodies floating in the water and feeling so helpless. Johnny still has nightmares from his experience.

## **Reflections by Sister Suzanne Bart**

In the months since the hurricane, what is missed most by members of my family is the closeness of family. Some have relocated to other places including Texas, Colorado, Georgia, and Kenner and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. They were, and are, most grateful for the financial help and spiritual support received from the Sisters of the Holy Family. The money was given to the heads of the families and they passed it on to their children and grandchildren who needed it for food and clothing and for the maintenance of their homes.

Some now have jobs, which helps since they have to pay rent and their mortgages. It is difficult to maintain a job and deal with this situation at the same time, but they are faith-filled people and know that God is with them. No members of my family lost their lives and for that we are most grateful. Material things do not mean as much now! On behalf of all my family, I thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers, good wishes and generosity. Knowing others are praying for my family means a great deal to them and to me!



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

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# Holy Family Ministries:

"Devoting one's life to others..." Sisters of the Holy Family find many ways to minister to the people

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*We hope you will enjoy reading about the wide variety of ministries and expressions of our charism that are described by our Sisters in the following pages.*

*Sister Jacinta Fiebig*

## LOVE CROSSES BARRIERS OF DIFFERENT WORLDS

As a Sister of the Holy Family, I have been in various ministries during my years in Community. I was in Day Home, Religious Education and Pastoral Ministries, and an AIDS Ministry. Then one day my life made a radical change. Circumstances brought me to retirement. It was a difficult time. After allowing myself to grieve over the loss of past ministries, I realized God was calling me to new horizons.

I found new challenges in our own backyard – Oroysom Village and Avelina, the affordable housing complex, which has been built on the property that once belonged to the Sisters of the Holy Family.

My new volunteer ministry consists of Home Visiting. The surprise came when I discovered, rather quickly, that many of the people in the complex spoke little or no English. It did not take too long for me to realize the language of love crosses over such barriers of different worlds. I was soon bringing Communion to a Korean couple who was homebound. I visited, quite frequently, a woman 99 years old living in Avelina, the section of homes for the elderly. She has now become a resident of a nursing home. Her daughter, who also lives in Avelina, now drives me to visit her mother.

One woman I visit reads and writes English but is unable to clearly speak her own language or English. We

spend our time together reading and writing what each of us wishes to communicate. The time spent together leaves me with a sense of God's presence.

Others whom I visit come from China, Nicaragua, Hungary, Peru, Mexico and Pakistan. There are 16 languages spoken in the Village. The people have attended two barbecues in our backyard. One notices a great deal of bowing, smiling, handshaking and hugging at these functions whether on our property or in their Community Center.

One day while attending a Christmas Party in their Community Center, I looked around at all the different nationalities, listened to the laughter, observed all the children singing together (in different languages sometimes), and I realized there could be peace in our world if we looked at our common yearnings and respected each other's differences.

Of late, I have encountered another joy. There are now six residents of the Village who have joined On Lok SeniorHealth Services, the all-inclusive health care program, located at the Motherhouse. We, the Sisters, and they, our neighbors, are sharing a common service we all need.

There are places where there is Peace on Earth.



*Sister Karen Stern*

## SEEKING JUSTICE IN NON-VIOLENT WAYS

Last year I attended the JUST FAITH course sponsored by St. Joseph Parish in Fremont. It opened my eyes to the destructive, unjust conditions which leave two-thirds of the peoples of this world in poverty, famine and disease. Many times during that year the readings and discussions brought me to tears and to anger. I also came to realize that anger and the desire for retaliation didn't help any situation. You can't fight violence with violence.

At the end of the course we each had to commit ourselves to a follow-up action. Mine was to join PAX CHRISTI, to change the anger within myself and to do justice in a non-violent way.

PAX CHRISTI was approved by Pius XII in 1952 as the International Catholic Movement. It was founded in the U.S. in 1972 and has as its goal to promote gospel non-

violence, peace making, disarmament, works of justice and disarming the heart.

It has been a good choice for me. The members meet twice a month for prayer and discussion of non-violent strategies, and decide on what action we will take.

So far, I have been involved in two actions. In October, I marched with thousands of others in San Francisco to end the war in Iraq, and in November, we stood on the steps of the Old Mission Church with a banner proclaiming the 1000th execution since the ban was lifted in 1972. Both are priority issues of PAX CHRISTI members.

I know it will take me the rest of my life to consistently live and think non-violently, but belonging to PAX CHRISTI and sharing in the commitment to peace by its members will be a step in this direction.



*Sister Martha Amezcua*

## PROVIDING A HOME FOR YOUNG GIRLS

An article was written prior to June 2005 informing the Congregation of the unfolding of a new ministry – Foster Care. Sister Ancila De La O and Sister Martha Amezcua completed foster care training in April 2005, and our home became licensed for two minors. We requested girls, ages 12 to 17. The first young girl came to us at the end of June and is still with us. Other girls, 13 to 17, were with us anywhere from three days to two weeks. Our fourth girl, age 13, who came to us in November, is a companion to our first foster child and will be with us for a few months.

Sitting around the dinner table one evening, the girls shared some of their feelings from their stay in previous foster homes. These are some of their comments...“At the other house I had to ask for food or drink, we were never asked what we needed (clothes, etc.), no one looked at our clothes to see if they fit or needed mending, no one ever took the time to make arrangements for me to have

contact with my family, no one took the time to help me with my homework, and at one home I had food and clothes but was never asked how I was. Their own children would get jealous and not allow us to share in their toys or games and would not allow us to play with them.”

As we listened to these comments, I thought of all that these young girls have gone through. To feel like strangers in a foster home is no easy task for young people. Sister Ancila and I feel very fortunate that the girls are comfortable with us and could share their feelings with us. It is our hope that they can take something good with them when it is time for them to return to their own homes.

We are pleased that we have the space and the gifts to share with them. They have certainly kept us young with their challenges!



*Sister Mercedes Braga*

## HELPING PEOPLE DISCOVER THEIR "SELF WITHIN"

### MID-LIFE AND LONG LIFE DIRECTIONS WORKSHOPS

I have been a certified consultant and facilitator for the Mid-Life/Long Life Directions Workshop for over 10 years. The Mid-Life/Long Life Directions Workshops are for people from ages 35 to 65 plus and 65 to 85 plus. The program was designed by Sisters Janice Brewi and Ann Donovan, CSJ, 25 years ago and the workshops are given internationally.

The purpose of the workshop is to lead the individual into a process of discovery of the "self within" that needs to emerge as he or she continues to mature and develop. The program draws on the insights of the best Judeo-Christian spirituality and Jungian psychology, as well as the personal experiences of the participants and the facilitator. It is a time to look at life's transitions and renaissance, to unleash the dynamism of this time of life and to allow the past, present and future to come together. Participants are invited to learn how to relax and contemplate, as well as to reflect on their deepest beliefs.

Each stage of life has particular gifts; it is important that individuals move on to the next stage. What is genuine spirituality for the middle and later years? How to continue to ignite passion for life throughout the second half or third part of life? These are questions which are addressed.

There are tools for drawing on inner powers and energies, as well as ways to deal with the negative expressions of the person's shadow, or that of someone else. How can the child within us give new enthusiasm for our life's journey? Finally, who is the mysterious self and how does he/she relate to the person he/she is now. It is an exciting and satisfying terrain to explore.

Last June, I returned once again to New Jersey to pursue further studies with Sisters Janice and Ann, the designers of the program.



*Sister Laetitia Rossi*

## HOME AGAIN AT ST. ELIZABETH'S DAY HOME

I am privileged to be working once again at St. Elizabeth's Day Home. It is like "coming home." We have a great Executive Director, Dianna Ballesteros, who is carrying forward the 100-year tradition and vision of the Sisters of the Holy Family, "To serve the needs of children and their families in a caring home-like setting."

Besides the usual reception area responsibilities, I keep records of the Food Program, teachers' monthly classroom rosters, and keep track of parents' signatures on the sign-in and sign-out sheets. I also assist the Executive Director on any projects which may arise.

Because of the licensing regulations and the adult to child ratio, I can be called upon at any time to assist in the classrooms, which I am qualified to do, as a result of my

years of day home experience and my college units in Early Childhood Education.

The joy of my day is the time the children are leaving for home. They stop to see me at the front desk for their "stamp" and roll up their sleeves so I can stamp their little arms with animals, balls, etc. They are very particular and want certain stamps not only for themselves, but for their mothers and fathers as well! The toddlers are especially cute when they jump on my lap, roll up their sleeves, and say, "tamp pease."

In 2007, St. Elizabeth's Day Home will be celebrating their 100th anniversary. They are asking for all alumni to attend. This will be quite a celebration!





*Sister Margarite Apostolo*

## HELPING PEOPLE GRIEVE AND LIVE AGAIN

In June 2005 I retired from Seton Medical Center Hospital where I had been a chaplain for 18 years. During those years, I was asked to give Bereavement classes. My ministry was challenging, as well as very rewarding. Upon coming to the Motherhouse, I knew I would be able to continue my grief ministry knowing that people hunger for spiritual healing after losing a loved one.

In October 2005 I started a small class at the Motherhouse. This class is structured by providing reading material each week which the participants can reflect on. The classes are composed of eight sections. Homework is given out and returned. This material helps me perceive the advancement of each individual and to develop points which need further clarification. The class is very gratifying.

I witness people coming in broken and hurting, not confident of what the outcome will be and what will help them deal with the pain. Each person is of great help to one another as they nurture and support one another. During the classes the group shares who is supportive and who is not. I speak of ways they can work on their

negative feelings, anger or guilt. One lady shared her surprise on the variety of material that focuses on healing. In the eight weeks as they come together, I observe the progress they are making. The most important and rewarding aspects of this class are the participants themselves expressing their advancement in the healing process.

When the class is finished, the participants are able to see, share and express their growth. I encourage them to continue their healing process by journaling, staying in touch with one another, and doing things that help them lower the stress that the death has caused. The following are some elements which could help alleviate stress: reading, meditating, nurturing their bodies and spirits, using light, color, music, and the variety of things we focused on for healing during class.

In the New Year, I am confident that the classes will continue. New ways to challenge and help those in need will help me continue to enlighten those whom God sends my way.

*We are especially grateful for the grants and bequests we received this year.*

*October 1, 2004 thru September 30, 2005*

### *Grants*

*Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation*

### *Bequests*

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## Sister Marjorie Wakelin

# SHARING OUR GIFTS THROUGH TEACHING

What is it to “Teach?” We all know the experience. We have all lived very active lives and in many ways we are still teaching. Now that I am retired, it is my privilege to teach the multi-cultured people that I love.

To bring in students, my flyers are distributed in the parishes throughout the area. It was with great surprise that I discovered that changing the title of the flyer from “ESL” to “Improve Your English” would increase the size of my classes so much.

My classes are held at the Motherhouse, and also at Avelina, the senior housing complex adjacent to the Sisters of the Holy Family.

The Sisters have a history of helping people learn English. Two years ago, Sister Jacinta Fiebig taught the upper level group and now Sister Kathryn Morrow visits Avelina every week to converse with two men, one from Burma and the other from Korea. Both men are anxious to improve their vocabulary and continue to work on it daily.

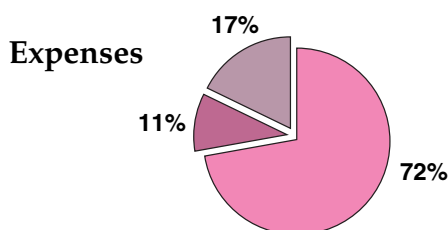
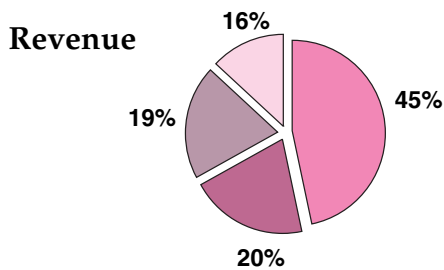
My class of 20 people includes beginners and intermediate students. Some students are so anxious to learn English they use electronic translators, which do not help with idiomatic and colloquial expressions. I tell the students that the translators will not help them, as they must get used to listening to the language before they can begin to speak it. They eventually learn to think in English, but the switch takes place gradually.

The men who are more advanced help me. One translates into Mandarin what I am saying and another translates into the language of Afghanistan. They know what others need to hear since they have struggled to learn English also. Now I have someone from Vietnam that can help the Vietnamese students, and a Korean woman who can help the Korean students. It is beautiful to see how they help one another so all their gifts are used.

It is a joy to teach English, and I am glad to be able to do it.

## SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY CURRENT FUND REVENUE AND EXPENSES

OCTOBER 1, 2004 THRU SEPTEMBER 30, 2005



### Revenue\*

Member Compensation	\$ 1,574,724
Rental	\$ 684,761
Gifts, Guilds, Bequests, Etc.	\$ 635,217
Social Security Income	\$ 536,761
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 3,431,463</b>

### Expenses

Community Living	\$ 3,011,835
Health Care/Care Center	\$ 458,006
Supporting Services	\$ 700,272
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 4,170,113</b>
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>\$ -738,650</b>

**Note:** In addition to the expenses mentioned above for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2005, the Sisters of the Holy Family contributed \$680,595 to ministries and other needs consistent with their mission.

\* The Revenue does not include Realized/Unrealized Capital Gains/Losses in our Investment Portfolio.

A copy of the independent audit for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2005 is on file in our Finance Office.



## *Sisters Diana White and Carolyn Whited*

# "I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME..."

As Catholic chaplains in a state prison, we daily encounter broken human beings. Many of the men who seek us out are bowed under by their sense of guilt, shame, and the inability to forgive themselves.

Many have been scarred emotionally, not only by their own acts, but also by a long history of childhood neglect and abuse. Many are barely literate, and some cannot read or write at all in any language. Loneliness is pervasive and thoughts of the children they have not helped to raise, nor have seen or heard from in many years, haunt them. A majority of them struggle with addictions to drugs, alcohol, or sex.

Often we sit with men who allow their tears to flow only in front of us when they have lost a loved one in death, or a wife has grown weary with waiting and has moved on to make her own way in life. The men are unable to grieve with family and friends and rarely can attend a funeral. They desperately need help and guidance in dealing with their grief.

Although one-to-one counseling is a large part of our work, we also provide weekly Catholic services – Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion on each of the seven totally separate yards in our institution. As frequently as

possible, we bring in volunteer priests to provide the sacraments with opportunities for confession.

As time permits, we offer instruction, opportunities for growth in prayer, seasonal celebrations and religious videos.

Since these men live in such a cold and inhumane atmosphere, our most important task is that of conveying to these men that, in spite of their crimes, God is always ready to respond to their broken and contrite hearts. They can only begin to believe this insofar as we are able to look upon them as human beings deserving our respect as persons loved by God and continually offered eternal life in His kingdom.

It is indeed thrilling to be able to walk with a sincere man through stages of despondency and shame, and to see him gradually grow in faith and hope.

Over time, many a criminal with a long list of offenses shows evidence in behavior and attitude of the grace of God working within him, so that even his countenance reveals an inner peace, fruit of his acceptance of God's faithful love.

### *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.*

*SHF President  
Sister Sharon Flannigan  
SHF Vice President  
Sister Gladys Guenther  
SHF Congregational Councilors  
Sister Caritas Foster  
Sister Sandra Ann Silva*

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Trish Carney, Congregational Secretary, 510-624-4596*

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