

Family of Friends

AUGUST 2008

To seek out

and

advocate

for the poor

and needy,

especially

families,



for the

Kingdom

of God.



With The Courage of Joseph,
The Faithfulness of Mary,
and The Compassion of Jesus,
Sisters of the Holy Family are
Committed to Promoting Justice and
Ecological Sustainability through The
Earth Charter and The Millennium
Development Goals.

President's Message

August 2008

Dear Friends,

Earlier this spring, I reviewed the progress of the history project of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (<http://www.womenandspirit.org/>), which is "a traveling exhibit that reveals the mystery behind a small group of independent American women who helped shape the nation's social and cultural landscape. First arriving in America nearly 300 years ago, throughout periods of struggle and controversy, sisters established schools, hospitals, colleges, and other social services that have served millions."



After a summer full of community meetings, gatherings with sisters, former sisters, and associates, and planning for the future, I was struck by the similarity of their brochure's topic headings with the lives and ministry of our own Sisters, especially the Jubilarians whom we celebrated in June:

*They came filled with Pioneer Spirit
They experienced Prejudice Within and Without
They were examples of Courage and Care
They participated in Community and Nation Building
They provided Leadership in Education
They were Innovators in Healthcare
They continued to look for the Signs of the Spirit in our time*

These Jubilarians are not women of 100 years ago, they are women of our time who continue to live out the charism in 2008 of our foundress, Elizabeth Armer, in Fremont, Oakland and Richmond, California, and San Antonio, Texas. They are living examples of the event we heard proclaimed at Pentecost:

"As the Spirit fell upon them, their hearts were opened and they began to prophesy: Some used the utterance of wisdom, another the gift of knowledge, others became healers and interpreters of tongues. All used their gifts for the common good. In the presence of the Spirit, in the power of Pentecost love, they proclaimed a vision of God's shalom.."

(adapted from Acts 2)

We invite you to learn more about these women in this issue of "Family of Friends" and explore some of our current advocacy commitments. Please pray with us that our daughters will continue to prophesy justice, as it happened on the day of Pentecost!

Sincerely in the Holy Family,

Sr. Gladys Guenther

Sister M. Gladys Guenther
Congregational President

"Water flows from the high mountains.
Water runs deep in the Earth.
Miraculously, water comes to us, and sustains life.

Water flows over these hands.
May I use them skillfully
to preserve our precious planet"
-Thich Nhat Hanh

Water for Life

Water for Life is a Watershed Development Program promoting water and livelihood security in drought-prone areas of western Afghanistan. Essential to community health and stability, this program involves building and repair of major water infrastructure including canals, wells, pumps and irrigation systems. *Water for Life* sustains local agriculture with restored irrigation and drainage, as well as systems to prevent the devastating impact of floods and droughts.

Some of the Sisters celebrating their Jubilee this year requested that in lieu of gifts, a contribution be made to Catholic Relief Services specifically for the Afghanistan Watershed Restoration



This symbolic river of water graced the chapel during the Jubilee Mass.

Project. The decision was made primarily because the Sisters wanted to take an action that would reflect the commitment of the Sisters of the Holy Family in living out the Earth Charter.

Afghanistan was chosen because of the environmental emergency that is taking place there. The combined effects of natural resource degradation (poor people cut down key trees, grasses and shrubs along riverbanks for fuel) and the resulting drought reduced the biodiversity of watersheds, increased soil erosion and the likelihood and intensity of spring floods.

The *Water for Life* Watershed Restoration Project works with the local people to provide technical support in agriculture and water conservation and collection. The project supplies seeds for replanting rangelands, construction materials for the building of dams and reservoirs and even wages to support construction activities.

"One way or another, the choice will be made by our generation, but it will affect life on earth for all generations to come." (Earth Policy Institute)



— Ten Sisters Celebrated Jubilees in June —



*Sr. M. Edwardine Bohan
(70 years)*



*Sr. Mary Leonard Donovan
(70 years)*



*Sr. M. Lucille Hintze
(60 years)*



*Sr. Dorothy Schmedinghoff
(60 years)*



*Sr. Claude Marie Crinnion
(50 years)*

SISTER M. EDWARDINE BOHAN

For 70 years Sister Edwardine Bohan has exemplified the caring charism of Sisters of the Holy Family. That charism is what first drew her to the Holy Family Sisters when she read a pamphlet about them during her high school years. Her lifetime of ministry included caring for children and families in day homes, parishes and hospitals throughout the Bay Area. Sister Edwardine cherishes her vocation and feels very blessed to have been called to be a Sister of the Holy Family. She will be 90 years old soon and says, "Now I prepare for the days of my life's journey."

SISTER MARY LEONARD DONOVAN

Sister Leonard Donovan's life has been devoted to God and her ministry was devoted to education. She was the Coordinator and Director of adult religious education in the Oakland Diocese for many years, as well as serving in other religious education ministries throughout the state. Wherever she served, she radiated warmth, reflecting the love of Jesus to the people she served. Her current ministry is a ministry of prayer and her ready smile brightens the Golden Gleaners Community every day.

SISTER M. LUCILLE HINTZE

Sister Lucille Hintze has lived and worked in both the inner city and in the country. For the past 60 years, Sister Lucille's ministry was CCD in the Dioceses of San Jose and Oakland, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Since her "retirement" she has found a new passion for writing. Sister Lucille now carries on a ministry of correspondence and has written two books, each inspired by her vocation. Her first book, *Lucille's Harvest* is biblically inspired stories, ranging from the story of Esther, the slave girl, to the love letters of Hosea. Her second book, *Travel Becomes Us* is an

easy reading adventure story of her trip to the Holy Land with Sister Lorraine Duck.

SISTER DOROTHY SCHMEDINGHOFF

Music has been an integral part of Sister Dorothy Schmedinghoff's ministry since she first joined Sisters of the Holy Family in 1948. She was an organist in many parishes and for years was in charge of the music at the Motherhouse. Her ministry in Religious Education took her to Utah, Nevada and many cities in California. She taught liturgy at Holy Family College for four years and was at the Prayer/Renewal Center in Tiburon for two years. Sister Dorothy has a twin sister, Doris, who did not share Dorothy's call to a religious vocation as a young adult, but after Doris retired from her career in Washington, DC, she returned to California and was inspired by Sisters of the Holy Family Associate Program, which she joined. Now, both Dorothy and Doris live at the Motherhouse, in semi-retirement, staying very active with many volunteer activities.

SISTER CLAUDE MARIE CRINNION

Sister Claude Marie Crinnion first met the Holy Family Sisters when she began attending religion classes in her home parish in Oakland. The kindness and caring she experienced, and the creativity of the Sisters' teaching methods, helped God come alive for her and set her heart on a path toward religious life. During her 50 years as a Holy Family Sister, she has been graced to share the same message of God's love and care with children and adults through her catechetical ministry of teaching and administration in the dioceses of Oakland, San Jose, Monterey, Salt Lake City and the Archdiocese of San Francisco. The richness of her religious life has sustained her and continues to call her to an ever deeper relationship with the Lord.

continued on next page



Sr. M. Michaela O'Connor
(50 years)



Sr. M. Andrea Rangel
(50 years)



Sr. M. Joan of Arc Rodrigues
(50 years)



Sr. M. Laetitia Rossi
(50 years)



Sr. Elaine Marie Sanchez
(50 years)

SISTER M. MICHAELA O'CONNOR

Sister Michaela O'Connor loves stories and history. She particularly loves sharing Bible stories with other people and learning new stories about people and how their lives affected history. She is happiest when she is taking care of people and she has found a perfect ministry for these talents. She has been the Pastoral Associate to the Kmhmu' Laotian Community in Richmond since 1994. For them, she is an all-around caretaker and problem solver, one day helping someone through a maze of required paperwork, another day helping them find ways to document their community's history. In addition, Sister Michaela has been archivist for Sisters of the Holy Family for almost 20 years and will be happy to regale anyone with stories from "the early days of Holy Family."

SISTER M. ANDREA RANGEL

In Sister Andrea Rangel's 50 years as a member of the Sisters of the Holy Family, she has ministered in four states and worked with people of different nationalities and diverse cultures. This has enriched not only her spiritual journey, but has also deepened her appreciation for her own heritage. To everyone she meets, she brings the joy and happiness that she has found in her life as a Sister of the Holy Family. Sister Andrea is grateful to God, her family and to the Sisters of the Holy Family for all the opportunities and blessings she has received as well as friendships made not only these past 50 years, but all of her life.

SISTER M. JOAN OF ARC RODRIGUES

For more than 40 years, Sister Joan of Arc Rodrigues ministered in parishes all over California and in Hawaii. Mostly she was in Religious Education. In 1996, she became the Pastoral Care Director at the Motherhouse in Fremont where she served until 2005. Her ministry today is

to the Community of Sisters who have been with her for the past 50 years as vowed women of God.

SISTER M. LAETITIA ROSSI

Sister Laetitia Rossi says she first became acquainted with Sisters of the Holy Family when her younger sister was going to St. Elizabeth's Day Home. Sister Laetitia immediately loved the place - the atmosphere, the Sisters, everything about it. She just wanted to be there and she started doing volunteer work at the Day Home when she was in 8th grade. Sister Laetitia says, "Religious life has been wonderful...this is my love. I never thought of doing anything else. It has been a beautiful life, and I think that God still has more for me to do." Her ministries have mostly been in day homes, which she loved, but her real vocation is dedication to God. Sister Laetitia bubbles with happiness and enthusiasm, which she brings to her current ministry as receptionist at the Motherhouse. She is a friendly voice and face and always willing to help out wherever she is needed.

SISTER ELAINE MARIE SANCHEZ

Like many Holy Family Sisters, Sister Elaine Marie Sanchez's ministry began in Religious Education, but for the past few decades her focus has been outreach, social services, and advocating for others. For eight years, Sister Elaine Marie was President of Sisters of the Holy Family. She is a resourceful, energetic woman who lives out the gospel message by helping other people find their voices. In the 1990s she was the driving force in accomplishing construction of affordable housing on the property adjacent to the Sisters' Motherhouse. Today, Sister Elaine works at a parochial school that serves poor families in Oakland. She does community organizing and outreach and works with women from other communities to advocate for those who are in need, particularly addressing poverty and violence.

Taking a Stand Against Human Trafficking



“The reality is that trafficking is now the world’s fastest growing crime. I believe that every person, corporation and government can make choices, which will turn the tide and together we can see this great evil defeated...”

~ Steve Chalke, Chair of Stop the Traffik Coalition and special advisor to the UN.

TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking involves the movement of people through violence, deception or coercion for the purpose of forced labor, servitude or slavery-like practices. It is slavery because traffickers use violence, threats, and other forms of coercion to force their victims to work against their will. This includes controlling their freedom of movement, where and when they will work and what pay, if any, they will receive.

Owning a slave has never been cheaper than it is today. Women, children, and also vulnerable men, work in factories, fields, restaurants, hotels, homes, and in every facet of the sex industry. This slavery exists in every country, including the United States.

In fact, trafficking in women and girls has become one of the fastest growing enterprises in the world. The United Nations estimates that over two million women and girls are taken from their homeland into other countries under false pretenses for the purposes of forced labor, domestic servitude or sexual exploitation. Trafficking and slavery are never “stand alone crimes.” They are linked to money laundering, drug trafficking, document forgery, human smuggling, rape, and torture.

This is a complex, multi-national, economically driven, politically charged reality... a reality that impacts us even if we do not yet recognize it. *(From the Sisters of the Divine Savior, with whom SHF participates in a Stop Trafficking Coalition.)*

“The trade in human persons is a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights.”

~ Pope John Paul II, May 15, 2002 letter

WE ARE CALLED TO RESPOND

In 2004 we, the Sisters of the Holy Family, officially committed to embrace the principles of the Earth Charter. Since then we have deepened this commitment in our own hearts and have sought ways of caring for the earth and its peoples. We have reflected on the Millennium Development Goals and have made choices that enhance the quality of the life for the poor of our world.

One of those choices is to take an active role in the fight against human trafficking. In January 2008, Sisters of the Holy Family began an educational effort regarding human trafficking. Sister Caritas Foster has been spearheading this educational phase and now, with the support of our Leadership Team, has made this her full-time ministry. One of Sister's activities is to give talks to various civic and religious groups in the Bay Area in order to raise awareness of the exploitation of women, men and children through human trafficking and to foster support for the victims of this awful crime. If you know of a group that would be interested in having Sister Caritas speak to them, please contact her at caritas@holyfamilysisters.org or call the Motherhouse at 510-624-4500 and leave a message for Sister Caritas.



Sr. Caritas Foster

At our Assembly in June, we, Sisters and Associates, chose a focus to address the issue of human trafficking as follows:

We, Sisters of the Holy Family and Associates, witness to the good news and stand against conditions that demean or undermine the dignity of persons or the sacredness of the family. We witness to each person’s dignity, worth and the right to a full human life; at this time in our history we stand against the devastating evil of human trafficking. We stand with every woman, man and child who has been victimized by human trafficking and support their healing, restoration and re-integration into a life worthy of her/his human dignity. Thus,

- *We commit ourselves to continue raising our own awareness of human trafficking as well as the awareness of others.*
- *We commit ourselves to finding creative ways to support those rescued from human trafficking.*
- *We commit ourselves to supporting legislative action and advocacy on behalf of all caught in the web of human trafficking.*

Sisters of the Holy Family also co-sponsor the “Stop Trafficking!” newsletter. A link to this informative newsletter can be found on the HolyFamilySisters.org Web site.

Calendar

September

Palmdale Spectacular will not be held this year

- 4th High Tea with Mission San Jose Motherhouse Guild at Best House, Palmdale Estates
- 14th Our Lady of Sorrows (Feast Day of Sister Dolores Armer, SHF co-founder). Evening Prayer in SHF Motherhouse Chapel at 4:45 p.m. Dinner to follow in Motherhouse Dining Room. RSVP to 510-624-4580
- 21st Celebration of 80 years of SHF Continual Service in the Fresno Diocese to be held at St. John's Cathedral, Fresno, California, 10:30 a.m.

October

- 1st Holiday Raffle Drawing tickets to be mailed
- 15th Teresa of Avila (patron saint of Sister Teresa O'Connor, SHF co-founder) Eucharistic Celebration at 4:00 p.m. in SHF Motherhouse Chapel

November

- 1st All Saints Eucharistic Celebration at 4:30 p.m.
- 2nd All Souls Reception at SHF Motherhouse at 2:00 p.m. for the faithful departed for whom we have received memorials throughout the year. Evening Prayer at 4:00 p.m.
- 6th SHF Foundation Day
- 16th Online Auction begins and continues through December 16

December

- 12th Our Lady of Guadalupe Eucharistic Celebration in SHF Motherhouse Chapel at 11 a.m.
- 16th Online Auction ends
- 16th Holiday Raffle Drawing
- 16th Nativity Raffle Drawing (tickets available at front desk in the lobby at the Motherhouse)
- 28th Feast of the Holy Family

Gifts Opportunities for You

Planned Giving

As autumn approaches, many pause to review, reflect and plan for the Season of Giving. As a traditional time when expressions of gratitude pour forth for blessings we may have received, for many it is a time for sharing with others through charitable gifts. Thinking carefully about what you may want to give, and when to give it, can greatly increase the impact of your gifts. We hope you will consider the Sisters of the Holy Family in your Season of Giving.



Gift of Prayer

The Sisters of the Holy Family "Gift of Prayer" offers a thoughtful and special way to remember the deceased or to honor a friend or relative.

- Celebrate a birthday, anniversary, wedding, graduation or other happy occasion
- Gather spiritual support and help for those experiencing sorrow or in need of physical healing
- In memoriam to celebrate a life and to pray for the faithful departed

This is your opportunity to make a meaningful remembrance to the Sisters of the Holy Family through the "Gift of Prayer." Upon receipt of your donation an acknowledgement card will be sent to the family or person indicated. The amount is kept confidential. The name of the person in whose memory or honor the contribution is made will be entered in our "Gift of Prayer and Memorial Book" in our chapel.

REFLECTIONS ON THE GOSPEL

For a weekly reflection on the Sunday Gospel, visit our Web site where you will find a link to Sister Carol Crater's weekly reflection.



Sister Carol is a gifted theological and reflective writer, whose reflections offer both insight and inspiration. There is a new message every week, so we hope you will visit often: holyfamilysisters.org

Online Auction

Isn't it great to give AND to receive? This is why we are extending to you, your family and to your friends an invitation to join in the Online Auction fun! Our Online Auction, to benefit our Mission Fund, is slated to begin November 16 and continue until December 16, 2008.

November 16 through December 16, 2008

http://holyfamilysisters.cmarket.com/SHF_Online_Auction08

Please visit to ...Place a bid ...Refer a friend ...Make a donation ...Window-shop our Online catalog. You never know what you may find, but here are a few special items we think you will like:

Swarovski Crystal Longnose Butterfly Fish Figurine

Handcrafted Folk Art Birdhouses by Sisters of the Holy Family

Associate, Philip Galvan

Special One-week Stay at the Sisters' Vacation Home, Casa Garcia

Specialty Cards Designed by Sister Dorothy Schmedinghoff

Please visit our Online Auction in support of the Sisters' Mission Fund.

Very specific examples of what the Mission Fund accomplishes include the ministries of our Sisters to support low-income families living in West Oakland by assisting with needed resources to assure safe neighborhoods and social services; teaching ESL to immigrants in Fremont; and assisting people to discover their inner wisdom and deepest truths through Personality and Human Relationships, as well as many other projects to support children and families in times of need.

Family of Friends

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to inform our friends of the activities of the Congregation
and to honor our generous donors.*

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Sister Guadalupe Partida

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SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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