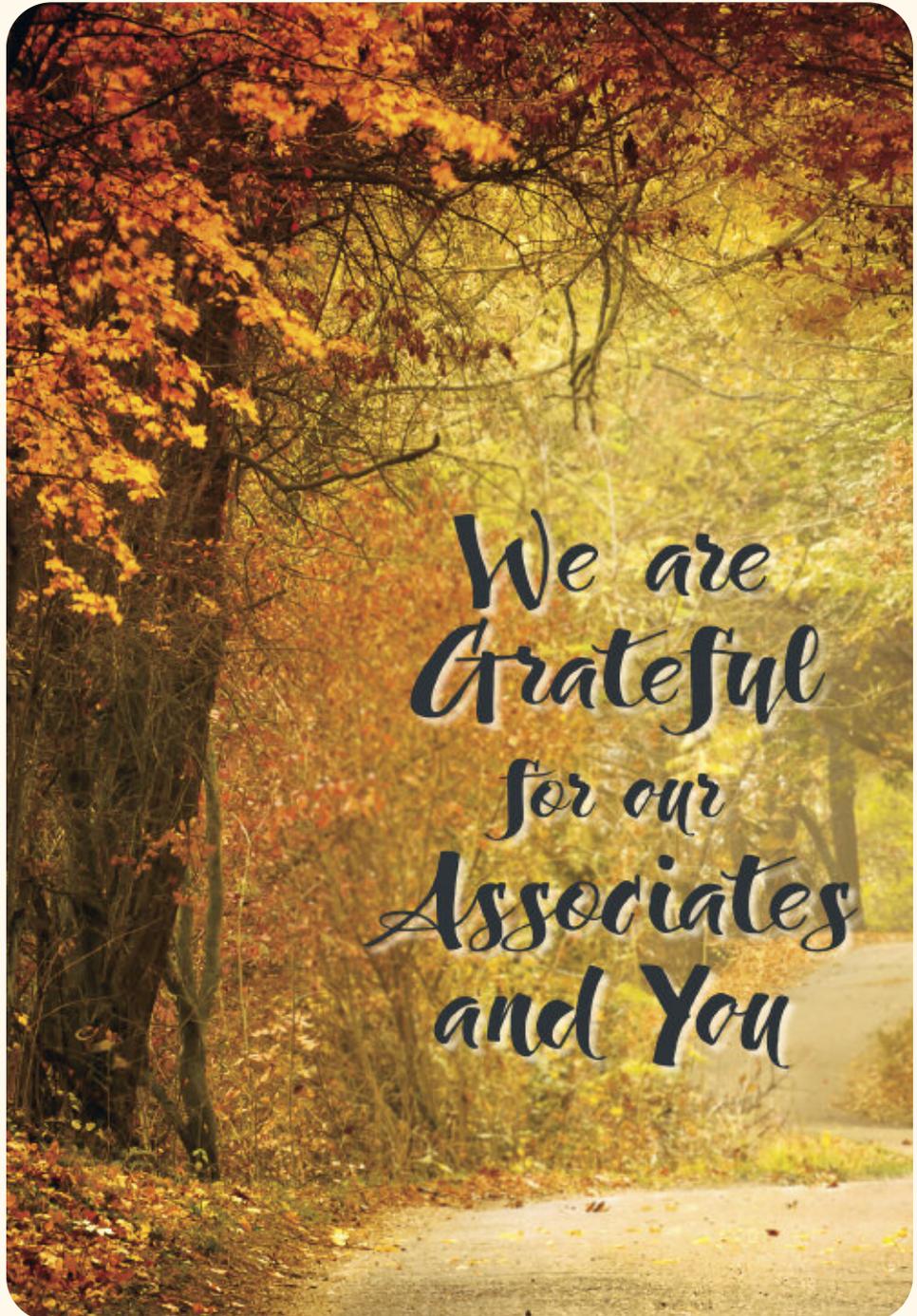


# Family of Friends

NOVEMBER 2016

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



*We are  
Grateful  
for our  
Associates  
and You*

# President's Message

November 2016



## Dear Family and Friends,

There is a lot of excitement in the air this fall. The Sisters are returning to mission oriented activities, which were punctuated by summer retreats and Congregational gatherings; the cottage construction at the Motherhouse is in progress and we anticipate occupancy by fall of 2017; we are preparing for election of new Congregational leaders in the summer of 2017; we were energized by a recent refugee family picnic in Fremont, which we sponsored as members of the St. Joseph Parish Refugee Committee; and we look forward to the celebration of Thanksgiving in a few weeks. Gratitude was especially on our minds in early autumn when 40 or so Associate members gathered for their Annual Assembly.

The annual event was especially celebratory as we acknowledged 25 years of Associate membership. This Assembly enabled the Sisters and Associates to connect and focus on deepening relationships, strengthening and extending membership, calling forth leadership and moving toward financial sustainability. In this issue of *Family of Friends*, we invite you to explore the presence of Associate life, the purpose of which can be found in their brochure:

*"Associates are women and men who, in the midst of their ordinary lives, feel drawn to the mission of Jesus in the spirit and charism of the Sisters of the Holy Family. United in this same spirit, Associates deepen their baptismal commitment by reaching out in various services and ministries, extending the commitment of the Congregation to care for the earth and its people."*

We are grateful for the many associations in which we participate, and we appreciate all of you who have enriched our lives and enabled us to seek out and advocate for the poor and needy.

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

Sincerely in the Holy Family,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Gladys Guenther". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sister M. Gladys Guenther, SHF  
Congregational President



## Origin of the Associates

*By Associates Pat Petit, Gloria "Delphi" Gonzales, and Joan Buckland*

In the 1980s many religious congregations were researching "Associate" affiliation. Associate affiliation was viewed by religious congregations as a way to expand their Community's Mission and Charism by inviting others to participate in this special call.

A spark of desire for association was ignited as Sister Jacinta Fiebig began her mission in South Dakota in 1980. Sister was lonesome for Community when she met Pat Petit, newly widowed, who was also searching for Community.

The spark of possible association was fanned with Sister Jacinta sharing the history, charism and mission of the Sisters of the Holy Family as she and Pat met regularly for prayer and a meal. In 1982 other women were invited to a meeting to explore the possibility of adopting a program of association into the Community. In 1984 Sister Karen Stern, Congregational President at the time, invited the South Dakota women to be a pilot group for exploring possibilities of association.

A task force of interested members of the Sisters of the Holy Family met in February 1988. Another spark of desire for ongoing association was fanned as former Sisters were invited to answer a questionnaire about potential association. By May, the task force included South Dakota representatives and former Sisters.

Task force members presented a proposal to the Congregation in June 1989. The Sisters affirmed the Associate Program in 1990. In 1991, the first Associates made their covenants. In the last 25 years, 102 women and men have made covenants as Associates of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

On September 18, 2016, the 25th anniversary of Associate living was joyfully celebrated with five from the original group. Those 25 years have produced changes in the Holy Family Associate life: an increase in numbers, the presence of men, and different leadership forms, to name a few.

Yet we still continue to ask ourselves, "Who are we?"

We are blessed to have as expert mentors, the Sisters of the Holy Family. We join ranks with the Sisters who identify with the overlooked or underserved because we strive to live the legacy of our Foundress, Lizzie Armer, "Remember, you belong to the people."

## Deceased Associates

*Ann Billeci*

*Lois Birch*

*Carol Brown*

*James Carpeneti, Jr.*

*Dottie Carriera*

*Frances Daufenbach*

*Teresa DeRiso*

*Jacqueline Francish*

*Philip Galvan*

*Carol Hernandez*

*Betty Jones*

*Dorothy Knowles*

*Carol Leone*

*Evelyn Mack*

*Martha Milner*

*Bianca Pastega*

*Janet Pessagno*

*Mary Resendez*

*Joyce Silva*

*Pat Ziesmer*

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# 25th Annual Associate Assembly

## September 16-18, 2016

Annually the Associate Assembly provides an opportunity to connect, deepen relationships with one another and the Sisters, to review outcomes of the previous Assembly implemented by the Associate Leadership Team, the Futuring Committee, and the various ways in which Associates locally and at a distance have been engaged. As recommendations surface, the Assembly affirms or revises recommendations through prayerful consideration and honest conversation. The 25th Annual Assembly focused on deepening relationships, strengthening and extending membership, calling forth leadership and moving toward financial sustainability.



*Congratulations to Five Associates Who Celebrated  
25 Years with Sisters of the Holy Family*

Gloria "Delphi" Gonzales ~ Shaun Peterson ~ Cathy Olivas  
Pat Petit ~ Eileen Rotert

# **A Prayer to Celebrate 25 Years and Carry Our Charism Into the Future**

*By Associate Bonita Ross*

*As we go forth sharing our love and charism of Holy Family, we are thankful for having spent this time together. Pray for each other as we continue on our journey into the future. We plan, we hope, we expect and yearn at what the outcome might be, but lean on each other and keep the forward momentum.*

*We offer a farewell to those Associates departed from us and welcome the new. We thank the Holy Family Sisters for their hospitality and love. With grateful hearts we thank Sister Elizabeth Avalos, BVM for being with us as facilitator and for all she shared with us.*

*May we all celebrate the relationship we share with the Sisters of the Holy Family in "seeking out and advocating for the poor and needy, especially families, for the Kingdom of God." With this charism in our hearts we have made a commitment to carry it into the future and share our gifts with others.*

*May the Spirit guide each of us as we step out on the unknown pathway and guide us through obstacles. May we find that this pathway will lead to growth and new energy, and sustain us in the future.*

*May wisdom guide and encourage us as we listen openly to each other with open minds and hearts.*

*We ask the Spirit to bless us on our mission of serving the poor and needy.*

*We thank God for being in our midst as we celebrate 25 years of Associate life with the Sisters of the Holy Family.*

*May the Lord bless and keep each of you in His loving care always.*

*Amen*

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## ASSOCIATES' REFLECTIONS

**Sophia Liu**

**First Covenant: 2014**

**Residence: Fremont**

One of my current ministries as an Associate is volunteering my services to teach and prepare adult immigrants to become citizens of the United States. The students are taught to prepare for citizenship in an eight week free citizenship class offered at the Fremont Main Library. My goal is to teach my students U.S. history from the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony to the terrorist attack of 9/11, our government's three branches and how they work, and their citizenship requirements, rights, and responsibilities.

**Elena Murphy**

**First Covenant: 1997**

**Residence: Henderson, Nevada**

After being introduced to the Sisters of the Holy Family by the Las Vegas Sisters, I fell in love with their work, charism and ministries. Although I no longer do homebound ministry and hospice, I am still an Extraordinary Minister in my parish. I was on the Associate Leadership Team for two terms, which were very meaningful to me. The gift of being an Associate is a calling I am so thankful for and can't imagine my life without the Sisters and Associates.

**Marina McFerran**

**First Covenant: 2004**

**Residence: Fremont**

I have been living my charism and mission with the Sisters of the Holy Family through monthly visits to a skilled nursing facility and working with special needs students at the Special Religious Education-Diocese of Oakland (SPRED).

**Catherine Olivas**

**First Covenant: 1991**

**Residence: Hollister**

I live my charism and mission within my family and through my work as a teacher at Sacred Heart Parish School in Hollister. I teach music to preschool through 9th grade students, and religious studies to our junior high students. I am encouraged and supported in my work by all of our Sisters and Associates, especially members of Lizzie's Circle.

# Assembly Scrapbook



## ASSOCIATES' REFLECTIONS



**Kathi Goodman**  
**First Covenant: 2001**  
**Residence: San Jose**

As an Associate, I have been living my charism and mission by supporting children at the California School for the Blind in Fremont by purchasing needed clothes, shoes, backpacks and toys. I have received so much in return through notes and pictures I have received from the children.

**Sarah Galvan**  
**First Covenant: 1993**  
**Residence: Hayward**

God has given me grace to continue to follow Christ. I am strengthened by the charism of the Sisters and inspired by Mother Dolores and Father Prendergast. I place myself and all my efforts to live out my Associate Covenant under the protection of the Holy Family.



**Angela Matthews**  
**First Covenant: 2011**  
**Residence: Fremont**

I am living the charism and mission of the Sisters of the Holy Family by raising puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind. I also take my therapy dog to visit schools, hospitals and senior centers. I am a substitute elementary teacher and help local teachers with their classroom environments and display boards.

**Aida Nelson**  
**First Covenant: 2014**  
**Residence: Fremont**

Ever since I became acquainted with the Sisters of the Holy Family, I cannot but admire their diverse work and dedication especially with families, the needy and the elderly. In recent years I have had the opportunity to live their charism and mission with the children and elderly of my own extended family.

# Las Vegas Associates Still Living Holy Family Charism

*By Associate Bonita Ross*

Many years ago the Sisters of the Holy Family began ministering in Las Vegas, Nevada to help the poor and needy. As time passed the Sisters touched many lives and inspired others with their mission of *"seeking out and advocating for the poor and needy, especially families, for the kingdom of God."*

During the time the Sisters were ministering in Las Vegas, the Sisters and Associates on a monthly basis would get together to share stories, pray together, and support each other in their spiritual growth. Associate numbers increased to approximately 16. It was an incredible extended family. The group established a phone tree system to notify each other of a need or prayer request.

Eventually the Sisters were called home to the Motherhouse in Fremont and the Associates were heartbroken to see them leave but understood. The little band of Associates carried on in their ministries and grew

closer by continuing to share their God given gifts. Little by little the number of Associates dwindled, for reasons of their own. Some did not renew their Covenants and others were called to their heavenly home. Las Vegas still misses the presence of the dear Sisters, but we know they are close in heart and we hold them all in our prayers.

Most importantly this small group of women and men, now numbering seven, continue getting together for prayer and camaraderie every month. We practice outreach to the best of our ability as age has also crept into our midst and we can't do as much as before. We continue to make hats and scarves for the homeless, which are delivered throughout the Thanksgiving season. Each Las Vegas Associate still serves in a specific parish ministry, but most of all we serve and support each other.

The spirit of the Sisters of the Holy Family is very much alive in this city of bright lights.

## 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 thank our generous donors.

SHF President

Sister Gladys Guenther

SHF Vice President

Sister Judeana Davidson

SHF Congregational Councilors

Sister Marietta Fahey

Sister Mary Lange

Sister Carolyn Whited

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# Sister Sandra Ann Silva's Pajaro Ministry Strikes a Chord with Prospective Associates

By Diane Swihart, Prospective Holy Family Associate

I was invited to a celebration for the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe by my friend, Yolanda Esparza-Snodgrass, also a Prospective Associate. At the celebration I was introduced to Sister Sandra Ann Silva. After talking with Sister Sandra Ann I discovered that she ministers to the Oaxacan people in the community of Pajaro. I was very interested in her work since my family is from that area.

I continued to ask Yolanda about Sister Sandra Ann and her work in Pajaro and Sister continued to be in my thoughts and in a dream. God was very specific in my dream asking me to be bold, to step out of my comfort zone and help Sister Sandra Ann with her ministry. I continued to have conversations with Yolanda and pray about the next step.

It occurred to me that we live with an over abundance of possessions. Yolanda and I decided to clear our lives of unnecessary items and bless someone else with them. With the help of family, friends and co-workers we were able to load our SUV with all the donations of new and gently used clothing and shoes, rice and beans, and a lot of love.

Yolanda and I have made several trips to Pajaro this year. We have a team of God's children collecting and giving to this mission and blessing those in need. And we are doing all this for His work, for His glory and for the good of all.

