

Volume 13.3 Winter 2010

Good NEWS

A Publication of THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA



Positive Parenting with a Nurtured Heart

Also in this issue:

- Lifting our Voices:
Praising God through Song
- People & Places
- Sharing the Good News

POINT OF VIEW

How Can We Keep From Singing?

This summer we celebrated our jubilarians, a gathering day, profession of vows, and our sisters who entered eternal life. In all of our celebrations, music played a key role. The words of the Quaker hymn, “Since Love is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing,” came alive.

Music has always been a medium to express the richness of shared emotion. It reveals our hearts and minds. Franciscans have nourished and encouraged music with the hope that the spiritual dimension of our lives might find both an avenue of expression and a source of inspiration from it.



**Sister Esther Anderson, OSF
Congregational Minister**

In the middle ages, troubadours were poets and musicians. History remembers St. Francis as a lighthearted troubadour. In his youth, Francis sang of knighthood and courtly love. After he experienced his religious conversion, he sang to Lady Poverty to express his profound love for persons on the margins of society. Francis also sang to praise God for the beauty of creation and became a troubadour for God.

In this Good News, we get a glimpse of the role that music plays in the life of our congregation. Sister Andrea Likovich follows the legacy of sisters who have used their musical gifts to bring light and life to our liturgical celebrations. She inspires us to lift up our voices and to sing our hearts out in praise of our God who is the love of our lives.

In her ministry of teaching positive parenting skills, Sister Theresa Elitz, an advanced trainer in the Nurturing Hearts Approach, brings harmony to families by helping them to appreciate the beauty of their children by focusing their energies in positive ways. The children express their love for their parent’s dedication by breaking into a song of gratitude, which is a moving and unforgettable experience.

These women en flesh the words of St. Augustine, “Let us sing a new song, not with our lips but with our lives.” They remind us that we can make our unique worlds into places dreamed by St. Francis—places of great love, joy, hospitality, compassion, and service.

Peace and all good!

St. Esther Anderson, OSF

Commitment Statement

We recommit ourselves to “rebuilding the Church” by living the passion of the Gospel in the discerning spirit of our Franciscan charism and tradition.

We are willing to take the necessary risks to be a healing, compassionate presence in our violent world especially with women, children, and those who have no voice.

We desire to reflect this commitment in our dialogue with the entire Church, in our own governing structures, and in our relationship with one another as sister.

Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, choose to live the Gospel in the prophetic spirit of Francis of Assisi and our Foundress Mother Francis Bachmann. With Jesus Christ as Brother, we live as sister with one another, with the entire human family and with all creation. Calling ourselves and one another to continuous conversion of heart, we commit ourselves to a life of contemplation, poverty and humility.

As vowed women of the Church, we respond with diverse gifts in a spirit of collaboration and of mutual service to the needs of others, especially the economically poor, the marginal and the oppressed. Seeking to participate in the Spirit’s action in the world, we direct our personal and corporate resources to the promotion of justice, peace, and reconciliation.

Filled with trust in the goodness of God, we move forward.

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Sister Theresa Elitz shows Hispanic parents in Wilmington, Delaware, some new techniques which help develop better relationships between them and their children. Using the Nurtured Heart Approach, Corazon Alimentado gives parents effective ways to modify their children's behavior, sometimes alleviating the need for medication.

Written by Elena Perri

Photography by Andrea Cipriani-Mecchi

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Although Sister Andrea Likovich often works behind the scenes, many are touched by her ministry as music and liturgy coordinator. As followers of St. Francis who called himself the "troubadour of the Great King," the sisters see music as an integral part of their congregation in many ways. Sharing her musical gifts, Sister Andrea enhances the lives of many, especially through music in liturgies.

Written by Elena Perri

Photography by Andrea Cipriani-Mecchi

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The purpose of *Good News* is to further the Gospel mission of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia by sharing the good news of the congregation with our friends, family, companions, and sisters. Through this publication, we hope to share the charism of our congregation and invite others to become involved in our mission.

Good News is published three times a year (spring, summer, winter) by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. We welcome your feedback and comments; correspondence should be addressed to *Good News* at address above.

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On the cover: Sister Theresa Elitz, director of St. Paul's Family Counseling Center, works with Lissette Alfara, an addictions counselor at the center. Lissette's son Anthony calls himself a "Nurtured Heart child" because his mother uses the parenting techniques she teaches.

When parents complete the Nurtured Heart program, their children present them with a certificate. Patricia Figueroa's children, Isabella, Fernanda, and Karla, were on hand to applaud her achievement.





At Corazon Alimentado, with its “heart-to-heart” approach, parents learn about their children’s need for positive affection.

Positive Parenting with a Nurtured Heart

“IT HELPED ME TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE AND EVERYTHING BECAME EASIER FOR ME.”

Augustin Guzman was so frustrated with his son Jose’s behavior that he often could not be in the same room with him. Jose is just one of the five million children in the United States between the ages of 3-17 who is thought to have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).^{*} Children with ADHD have problems with impulsivity, hyperactivity, inattention, or a combination of these issues. Stymied by the difficulty he was having with Jose, Augustin sought the advice of Sister Theresa Elitz, director of the counseling center at St. Paul Parish in Wilmington, Delaware.

Sister Theresa, an advanced trainer in an innovative parenting program called Corazon Alimentado (Nurtured Heart Approach), recommended that Augustin read the book *Transforming the Difficult Child* written by Howard Glasser. The book provides parents with techniques for reinforcing positive behavior in their children rather than giving them negative attention. “When I followed this approach, it straightened out everything at home,” said Augustin, a member of St. Paul’s for 12 years. “It helped me to focus on the positive and everything became easier for me.” His son Jose even became a better student and is now studying



Like Augustin Guzman, members of the Hispanic community from the neighborhood around St. Paul Parish appreciate the services received at Corazon Alimentado and some have returned as volunteers.

computer programming at Delaware Technical and Community College.

Sister Theresa’s professional expertise includes a master’s degree in counseling from Neumann University. In addition to being a registered nurse and licensed mental health and chemical dependency counselor, she is also a certified hypnotherapist, spiritual director, and counselor through the National Board for Certified Counselors. Since she often met parents like Augustin whose children had been diagnosed with ADHD and who were looking for help,

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^{*} Summary Health Statistics for U.S. Children: National Health Interview Survey, 2008, Appendix III, table VI



◀ *Instructors at Corazon Alimentado encourage parents to see their children as unique individuals with unique talents and gifts.*

“I ENJOY SEEING THE PROGRESS. PEOPLE COME THINKING THERE’S NO HOPE. AT THE END OF THERAPY, THEY’RE SO DIFFERENT.”

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Sister Theresa attended Glasser’s parenting program to take his advanced trainer course in Tucson, Arizona. “I was so impressed with this program that I immediately started using it in the office and had a great deal of success,” Sister Theresa said. A grant from the mission fund of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia enabled other facilitators to attend the advanced trainer course in Tucson in 2005. For the past five years, Sister Theresa and four other advanced trainers have offered the Corazon Alimentado parenting classes in Spanish in the Wilmington diocese. Sister Theresa and the trainers are bilingual and recently began offering the classes in English as well.

Help Among Uncertainty

The demand for Sister Theresa’s counseling ministry is great because of the limited number of bilingual counselors in the

Wilmington area and because many of the families lack medical coverage. “A lot of our people have nowhere to go because most places require that you have insurance,” commented Sister Theresa, who doesn’t charge a fee for her services but keeps a donation box in her office. “Before the recession, I received \$10,000 a year just from donations,” she added. “Some people put coins in, like the widow’s mite; others put a \$100 bill in the box.”

Sister Theresa finds her ministry rewarding. “I enjoy seeing the progress. People come thinking there’s no hope,” she said. “At the end of therapy, they’re so different. You can see it in their body language. They’re hopeful because they see they have options.”

Sister Theresa recalled a success story involving a teenage boy from Mexico who was being lured into a gang. “The reason he wanted to join the gang was because he didn’t have a sense of belonging,” she said. “A lot of his classmates ridiculed

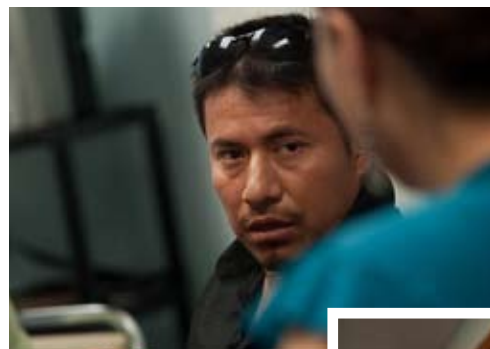
him because he was an immigrant.” Sister Theresa began teaching the boy’s mother the principles of the Nurtured Heart Approach and eventually he began engaging in volunteer activities. “He started using all that teenage energy for something positive,” she said. “I just felt overjoyed because he wasn’t thinking about joining a gang anymore.”

Nurtured Heart Approach to Parenting

While Sister Theresa teaches clients about the Nurtured Heart Approach during counseling sessions, most parents attend one of the classes offered at the parish. Participants in the classes want to learn how to be better parents and Corazon Alimentado helps them to achieve that goal. “Some parents find it difficult to be expressive and affectionate with their children,” Sister Theresa wrote in a special Father’s Day issue of *Papa Magazine*. “We



▲ *Lissette Alfaro, a Nurtured Heart trainer, talks with students in the parenting class about how to use the time-out technique effectively with their children.*



◀ *Corazon Alimentado is one of only two sites that teaches the Nurtured Heart Approach in Spanish.*

▶ *The staff’s team of experts is available for speaking engagements. They also hope to adapt the techniques for use with adults to improve relationships and to address certain mental health and addiction problems.*





Many children have benefited from the parenting classes at Corazon Alimentado. Parents learn how to focus on the positive behavior of their children and to strengthen relationships with them. While the program has been offered primarily to Spanish-speaking parents, it can also be presented in English.

try to tell parents to recognize the good things their children do and praise them for that.” Lissette Alfaro, an addictions counselor and a Nurtured Heart trainer at St. Paul’s, said, “It’s a revolutionary idea for them. The parents love it because they don’t have to spank their children to make them listen.”

Sister Theresa added that because parents, teachers, and babysitters have difficulty communicating with children with ADHD or other behavior problems, they often resort to yelling. She said this response causes children to feel that they are bad. “The children start acting out of that self-concept,” Sister Theresa said. “We need to reverse that mentality and teach the parents to notice when their children are doing good things. The whole concept of the program is to put a lot of positive attention on children’s good behavior.”

During the first class, the trainers explain the importance of parents controlling their emotions when they react to their children’s misbehavior. “We teach them to have control of themselves first, to breathe before they act so they can send a good message of self-control to the child,” Lissette said.

In the second session, the parents are taught how to use the time-out technique when their children misbehave. “We tell the parents that they don’t have to be drastic in their punishment and that time-out has proven to be the most effective method,” Sister Theresa said. She explained that time-outs are short—only about a minute long. As part of the process, she encourages parents to communicate what their child did well, for example, sitting quietly or going into time-out right away. “That positive reaction means so much to children,” Sister Theresa said.

Parents also have an opportunity to share their experiences with others during the sessions. “We create a special environment in the class,” said Miguel Gutierrez, pastoral associate at St. Paul’s and a Nurtured Heart trainer. “We realize that parents need to express themselves and we create that opportunity. It’s very beautiful that they express their own experiences and what they are learning in the class.”

One very special “moment” happens during the last session when Miguel takes the children of the participants aside so he can teach them a song that conveys their love for their parents. Before the children enter the classroom to sing the song, the parents have been asked to close their eyes and think about how much their children mean to them. When the parents open their eyes, their children begin to sing the

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HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- Pray for parents who are feeling overwhelmed in raising their children.
- Know how to speak Spanish? Consider volunteering to assist Sister Theresa with the Corazon Alimentado program.
- Donate to Sister Theresa's ministry by sending checks payable to the Sisters of St. Francis Foundation using the donation envelope. Indicate that the donation is for the Family Counseling Center of St. Paul's.
- Support legislation that will help immigrants, particularly the DREAM Act, which will give undocumented youth the opportunity to obtain legal permanent status in the United States. For more information on the DREAM Act, go to: <http://dreamact.info/>.

Share with us the good news of what you did!

*Call or email us with the action(s) you took:
(610) 558-7726, goodnews@osfphila.org.*

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song. "It's an unforgettable experience," Miguel said. "The parents are all crying. It's very moving." The children then present a certificate of completion to their parents.

After attending Corazon Alimentado, Lissette said that participants stop viewing themselves as bad parents. "They stop feeling guilty because they didn't know how to handle their child," she said. "They realize that they were simply not using the right tools. Learning those tools really helps them to feel more confident in working with their children."

Alleviating the Need for Medications

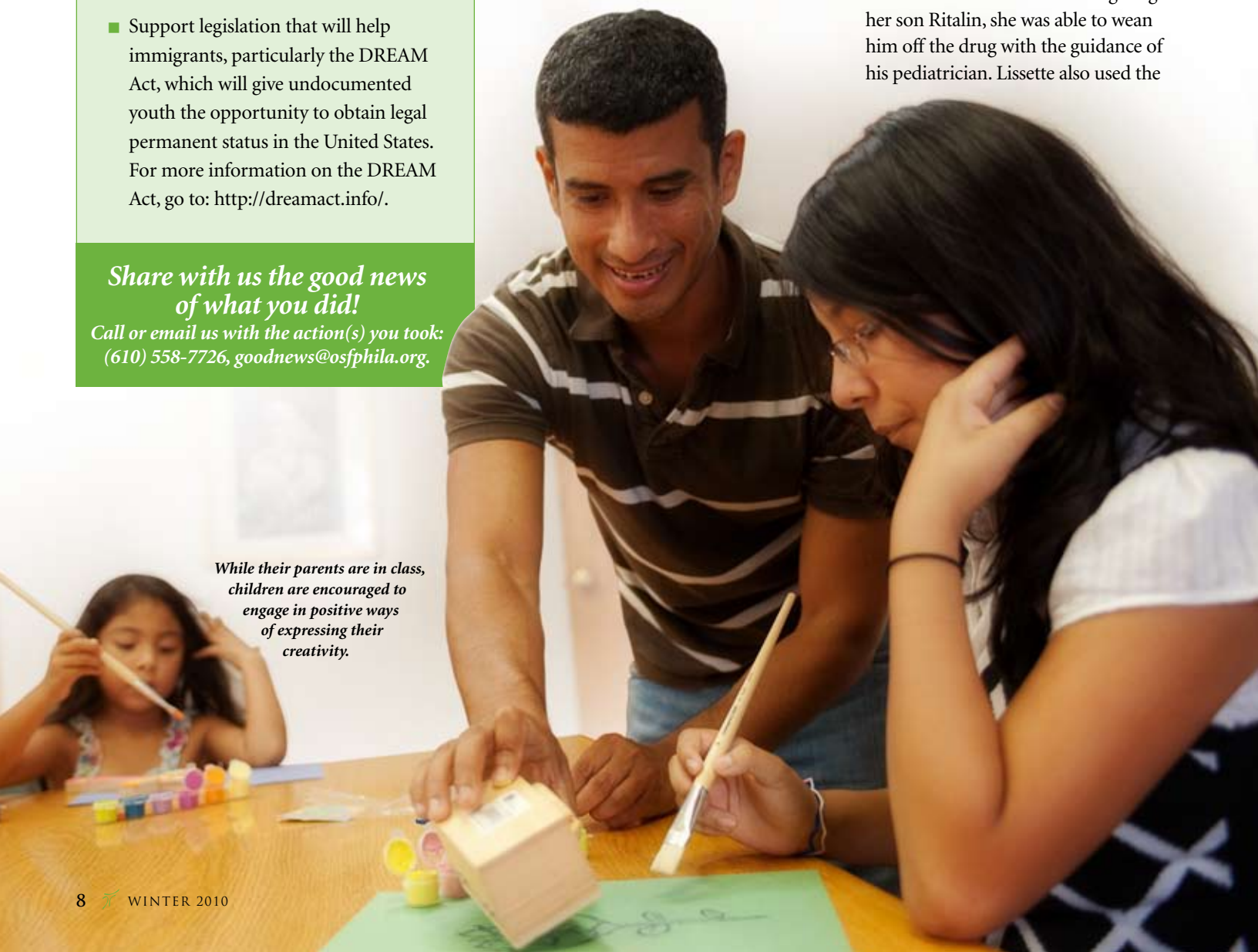
Another significant outcome of Corazon Alimentado is that it gives

parents the opportunity to wean their children off Ritalin or other medications. "My experience is that parents don't like their children on medication so they're trying to find another way to change their behavior," Sister Theresa said.

The problem with giving children these medications is what happens after the drugs wear off, Lissette added. "They're like fireballs at home because all that energy that was contained during the day has to come out," she said. Lissette, who has worked with Sister Theresa for six years, has firsthand experience with ADHD and Ritalin. Her youngest son Anthony, who is now 12, was diagnosed with ADHD and took Ritalin, a central nervous system stimulant, to improve his concentration in school.

Although Anthony's teacher recommended that Lissette continue giving her son Ritalin, she was able to wean him off the drug with the guidance of his pediatrician. Lissette also used the

While their parents are in class, children are encouraged to engage in positive ways of expressing their creativity.



► *Counselor Lissette Alfare encourages parents to use behavior modification techniques rather than to depend on medication to change their children's behavior.*

Nurtured Heart techniques with Anthony and achieved good results. "You should see the change in him," she said. "He is using his energy in a positive way. Now he calls himself a Nurtured Heart child."

Positive Impact on the Hispanic Community

Sister Theresa's ministry in the counseling center and with the Corazon Alimentado program has made a significant impact in the Hispanic community. Augustin Guzman said her ministry has changed his life. "Without her, I would have had a more difficult life," said Augustin, who has been a Nurtured Heart trainer for five years. "I feel very blessed that I have her in my life."

Delilah Colon, a counseling intern at St. Paul's, said Sister Theresa's ministry is definitely a valued resource in the Wilmington area. "The Hispanic community tends to deal with issues on their own because they're afraid to seek help from an outside source," Delilah said. "Many people come to St. Paul's because they know that there's a commitment to Hispanic people and that the staff will work to empower them and keep them moving forward."



"PARENTS ARE MARVELOUS PEOPLE AND HAVE A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, WHICH IS WHY MANY PARENTS ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING HOW TO BE BETTER PARENTS."

Having worked with the Hispanic community for more than 30 years, Sister Theresa acknowledges the impact of the services that she and her staff provide at the counseling center. "We have helped people through so many crises," she said. "I've met many struggling families and see what they go through. My heart goes

out to them." Sister Theresa points out, however, that the commitment is mutual. "Parents are marvelous people and have a great responsibility," she explained, "which is why many parents are interested in learning how to be better parents." And it is, perhaps, that mutuality of commitment to children and families on the part of both parents and the center that has made Corazon Alimentado such a success. ■

For more information or comments on this article, contact goodnews@osfphila.org.

For more information about the Corazon Alimentado program, go to: <http://corazonalimentado.blogspot.com/2009/01/welcome-to-corazon-alimentado.html> or www.familyrelationshiphelp.com, which is written in English.



The staff at Corazon Alimentado have seen proof of Howard Glasser's belief that the Nurtured Heart Approach can teach children to "use their intensity in wonderful ways and instead of acting-out problems [they] can act-out greatness."



◀ *Pro Mujer offers not only credit, but also business training, healthcare, and health education—the tools women need to change their lives. Women are empowered to become agents of change and lift themselves and their families out of poverty.*

of the congregation's history in the Pacific Northwest, Sister Jude Connelly presented the ambassador with a copy of the book, *A Beacon of Light*, a history of St. Joseph's Medical Center in Tacoma.



VERMONT

The Sisters of St. Francis are widely known for their outreach and compassion. What many do not know is that the sisters try to combine social justice work with savvy financial investing, especially through their community development investments. One loan recipient is the Vermont Community Loan Fund (VCLF), which helps socially responsible investors foster social justice and economic and community development. VCLF uses investments to provide loans, grants, and technical assistance in the development of affordable housing, local businesses, child care, and other projects. Thanks to the congregation and other similar investors, VCLF has created more than 2,700 homes for lower-income Vermonters, bolstered Vermont businesses that have created or preserved hundreds of jobs, and provided much needed child care throughout lower-income Vermont communities.

Who are the 'Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia'?

Through this section we hope to share a glimpse of our congregation and the individuals who make real its mission.

LATIN AMERICA

Pro Mujer is 20! And for 10 of those 20 years, the Sisters of St. Francis have helped Pro Mujer through the congregation's community development loan fund. From its humble beginnings in Bolivia, Pro Mujer has spent two decades empowering women to create better lives for themselves and their children. The organization has grown to become a leading women's development and microfinance organization, changing the lives of thousands of women across Latin America. Follow Pro Mujer's journey and catch a glimpse of the women who work each day to create better lives for themselves, their children, and their communities: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmjdYoI_DTE.



WASHINGTON

The sisters at St. Ann Convent in Tacoma welcomed a special visitor to their home this summer. Michael Collins, Ireland's Ambassador to the United States, was on his way to meet with state leaders in Olympia. When he learned that many of the sisters at St. Ann's had been born in Ireland, Ambassador Collins made an unexpected detour to visit with them. The sisters welcomed the ambassador with true Franciscan hospitality. To share some

◀ *The sisters at St. Ann Convent formed a reception line to greet Irish Ambassador Michael Collins. Sister Marie Linehan offers her special welcome.*



MASSACHUSETTS

Employees at Metro West Medical Center in Framingham, Massachusetts, were invited to a special gathering in May to learn who would be the winner of the 2010 Vanguard Compassionate Caregiver Award. There was the usual hush of expectation until the announcement that Sister Ursula Tisdall was the award recipient. Sister Ursula received the award for her ministry as a chaplain at Metro West. She was one of 30 employees nominated by both patients and peers, became one of three finalists, and was ultimately chosen as the 2010 winner. A wonderful video about Sister Ursula's work and her contributions to both patients and staff is available at <http://vimeo.com/11898635>.

PENNSYLVANIA

The Sisters of St. Francis have been instrumental in shaping and developing Holy Trinity Parish in Columbia, Lancaster County, for 141 of the parish's 150 years of existence—and 13 sisters were on hand to celebrate that momentous anniversary. In 1860, Philadelphia Bishop John Neumann founded the parish to meet the need of German immigrants living in the area. Five years later he opened the first parochial school in Columbia; three years later the Sisters of St. Francis arrived to staff the fledgling school. During their years of service, more than 200 Franciscan sisters ministered in the parish and school. One outcome of their dedication and service was that, over the years, 21 young women from the parish entered religious life—15 of them becoming Sisters of St. Francis. Today the congregation still maintains a presence in the parish. Sister Anna Maria Cosgrave ministers in the school and serves as coordinator of the parish religious education program. Sisters Elizabeth Lutter and Charlotte Lagnese live in the convent.



▲ Eleven members of the Sisters of St. Francis were on hand to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Holy Trinity Parish in Columbia, Pennsylvania. (Standing L-R): Sisters Alice Klein; Georgina Marmino; Albert Mary McSwiggan; Robert Marie Green; Charlotte Lagnese; Albertus Dougherty; Dominica LoBianco; Marguerite O'Beirne; Patricia Wickenheiser; Linda Fischer, ASC; Jean Wickenheiser. (Seated L-R) Sisters Elizabeth Therese Lutter, Dorothy Eppele, Anna Maria Cosgrave.

ALASKA

Since 1997 Sisters Ellen Eugene Callaghan and Kathy Radich have worked with the native peoples in the Diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska. The Spring 2010 issue of Catholic Home Missions Neighbor, a quarterly newsletter from Mission America, highlights their ministry. Sister Kathy is the diocesan coordinator of rural ministry for the Yukon Kuskokwim Region; Sister Ellen coordinates their diocesan native ministry training program. Their work takes them to 24 parishes in the widely scattered Yup'ik villages and includes rural deacon training, adult faith formation, and native ministry programs. To read the newsletter and get a fuller picture of the challenges in the sisters' ministry, check out the newsletter: <http://usccb.org/hm/newsletters/spring10.pdf>.



WASHINGTON

The Sisters of St. Francis have long been associated with Franciscan Health Systems in Tacoma. Recently FHS received the Catholic Health Association's premier award for excellence, effectiveness, and innovation in hospice and palliative care. In 2009, Franciscan, the leading provider of hospice services in Washington State, logged 116,598 visits to more than 2,400 home-based patients and admitted 590 terminally ill patients into their

20-bed inpatient hospice program. A second, closely associated award followed when Dr. Mimi Pattison, MD, medical director for Franciscan Hospice and Palliative Care, received the 2010 Sojourns Award from the Regence Foundation for leadership in and advocacy for palliative medicine.



PENNSYLVANIA

Hispanic ministry in Delaware County is celebrating its 10th anniversary and the presence of the Sisters of St. Francis has played a role in the ministry since its inception. A major impetus for this outreach to the Hispanic community originally came from both Sister Mary Kennedy and Father Peter Welsh. Today Sisters Dominica LoBianco, Genoveva Morales, and Elsa Vazquez all share their gifts with the Hispanic community in a variety of programs centered in Upper Darby and Chester. Activities include teaching ESL classes, providing for the needs of expectant and new mothers through the Baby Cupboard, holding garage sales, and coordinating a program for the reception and distribution of furniture and clothing. Creating an even greater sense of community and belonging for the area's Hispanic population are the numerous opportunities for prayer and liturgy that provide spiritual enrichment.



▲ Mark Rake-Marona, director, and Mimi Pattison, MD, medical director, receive the 2010 Achievement Citation award for Franciscan Hospice and Palliative Care by the Catholic Health Association.

Sister Andrea Likovich, the music and liturgy coordinator at Our Lady of Angels Convent, has gifts that go beyond her own musical talents. She creates an atmosphere that invites each choir member to give a full-hearted performance—secure in the realization that their individual gifts are valued and utilized in the best way possible.



“WHEN A LITURGY CLICKS AND THE MUSIC IS IN SYNC WITH THE HOMILY, WHEN THE PEOPLE ARE SINGING FULL THROATED AND ARE ENJOYING WHAT THEY ARE SINGING—THAT BRINGS ME GREAT JOY.”



Sister Andrea's extensive understanding of multiple instruments allows her to incorporate a variety of musical sounds into the liturgy. Invitations to guest musicians also add diversity and richness to the services at the motherhouse.

Lifting our Voices

Praising God through Song

Soft music fills the chapel, creating a prayerful atmosphere for the congregation assembled for Mass. The choir stands, preparing to sing a hymn. The director quietly counts 1, 2, 3, 4, and moves her hands rhythmically through the air



Sister Andrea often finds inspiration in the quiet of the motherhouse grounds.

to the beat of the music, directing the choir and musicians through each verse of the song.

Orchestrating the music is Sister Andrea Likovich, who has served as music and liturgy

coordinator at Our Lady of Angels Convent in Aston, Pennsylvania, for nearly 18 years. Sister Andrea, a soprano who plays the piano, organ, and guitar, is well suited for this role. “Music is in my blood,” she said. “If I’m not doing music, there’s something terribly missing in my life.”

Sister Andrea’s affinity for music began early in her life. Her mother played the piano and her father played the harmonica. “The love of dance and music is very much a part of my family,” she said. “Polka music would put us up on the dance floor. We just had to move.” She finds playing the piano

a particularly rewarding skill. “It nourishes my soul when I’m playing and others are singing their hearts out,” Sister Andrea said. “It thrills me that I can enable them to praise God through song because of the way I’m playing.”

As music and liturgy coordinator, she is instrumental in enhancing the prayer lives of the sisters through weekly liturgies, congregational jubilee celebrations, and special feast days. To create spiritually enriching liturgies, Sister Andrea spends hours reflecting on the Mass readings, selecting hymns, and ensuring that all participants in the liturgy know what they need to do. “I focus first on the readings and then on who will be present for the celebration,” Sister Andrea said. “I want the congregation to be comfortable with the songs I choose so they can participate as fully as possible.”

Although Sister Andrea is the primary coordinator of liturgical celebrations, she meets monthly with a liturgy committee that assists her with planning jubilee or feast day Masses. “We make some really good pastoral decisions related to the liturgy here at the motherhouse that people really appreciate,” said Sister Andrea.

Father Cyprian Rosen, OFM, Cap., chaplain at Our Lady of Angels Convent, serves on

the liturgy committee and is impressed with Sister Andrea’s knowledge of liturgy. “She understands the correct way of doing something and why it’s done that way,” Father Cyprian explained. “She’s always on the lookout for liturgical changes taking place and is way ahead of us in preparing for new translations. She’s been a real leader in that sense.”

Graced with many gifts

Sister Andrea’s innate organizational skills also enhance her ministry. “She has the gift of being a good musician and being organized, which is a rare combination,” said Sister Elizabeth Scully who lives at Our Lady of Angels Convent and volunteers to help at Masses. “She has a great sense of coordinating the music with the message of the Gospel.”

In addition to rehearsing with the choir, Sister Andrea also makes sure the sisters who serve as liturgical ministers are prepared for their roles. “She writes notes to people who have a specific role so they know exactly what to do,” said Sister Elizabeth. “She takes time to practice so that people who are going to be participating are well prepared.”

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Just as individual notes blend to create a musical composition, the contribution of the liturgy committee members create meaningful liturgies for all who visit the motherhouse.

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Father Cyprian is also grateful for Sister Andrea's thoroughness in planning liturgies. "She has all the details down," he said. "She even prepares my part. It's one less worry for me."

Sister Pat Smith, another liturgy committee member, also admires Sister Andrea's ability to coordinate major events. "When we have practices for jubilee, she has every detail written out," Sister Pat said. "We always tease her about it but those practices help to make the celebration run smoothly."

Sister Andrea credits some of her skill at planning and organizing to her teaching experience. As a former teacher at The Catholic High School of Baltimore, she directed musicals and concerts. "When you're a teacher, you absolutely have to be organized," she said. "When you're doing plays and shows with the students, the whole thing will fall apart if you're disorganized."

Sister Andrea continues to utilize her teaching skills. "I teach a hymn to the sisters the same way I would teach it in the classroom," she said. "And when sisters ask questions, I need to present the answer in a way that is understandable and satisfies their need to know."

Music at the Heart of the Congregation

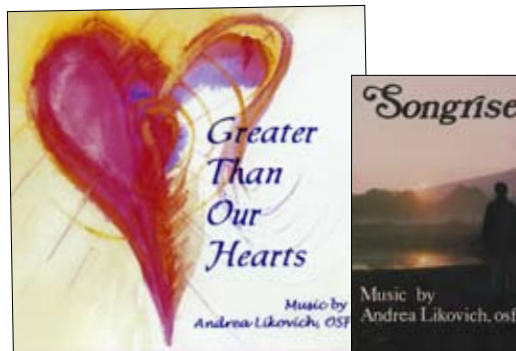
Sister Andrea realizes she is carrying on a legacy that is important to the sisters. They are, after all, followers of St. Francis who called himself the "troubadour of the Great King" and who sang the praises of God through all creation. Music has been

► *Creating an appropriate environment is an important feature of liturgical planning. Here Sister Andrea drapes the crucifix in preparation for the Taize prayer service held regularly in the motherhouse chapel.*



an integral element in the history of the congregation. "Our sisters have a heritage of singing well that precedes me," she said. "I think it gives the sisters great joy to know that it's continuing."

Another noteworthy musician in the congregation was Sister Bonagratia Hughes who wrote the "Blessing of St. Francis" which is still sung at professions, jubilees, and funerals. "She was the music guru for the community in the 40s and 50s," Sister Andrea said. "She was an incredibly gifted musician. I'm standing on her shoulders."



You can own copies of Sister Andrea's recordings! For more information, visit: <http://osfphila.org.ldh0242.uslec.net/node/269>

Sister Betty Kane, a member of the choir who knew Sr. Bonagratia from her years of teaching, described Sister Bonagratia as "a woman who knew music, loved music, and wanted everybody else to love music."

In the early 1960s, to raise funds for the campaign to build Our Lady of Angels College (now Neumann University), Sisters Francis Assisi McDade and Rose Cecilia Case worked with other sisters to make two LP records, *Joyous Echoes* and

We Sing of Christmas. Then in the 1980s, under the direction of Sister Andrea and Sister Gerald Helene Connelly, sisters in the former St. Joseph Province performed concerts to raise money for retirement. For several months each year, the sisters met for rehearsal—one group in Baltimore, Maryland, the other in Wilmington, Delaware. After a few total group rehearsals, the choir took the show on the road for performances in Baltimore, Wilmington, and Philadelphia.

Continuing the tradition of songwriters in the congregation, Sister Andrea has produced two recordings of her own songs: a cassette tape titled *Songrise* in 1990 and a tape/CD titled *Greater Than Our Hearts* in 2002.

In addition to writing her own songs, Sister Andrea has had the opportunity to share her musical talent with Third Order Regular Franciscans across the United States. Sister Kathleen Moffatt, who worked in the office of the Franciscan Federation, invited Sister Andrea to take part in "Facing the Christ Incarnate," a program the federation presented across the United States and Jamaica from 1996 to 1998. Sister Andrea prepared the liturgies, played piano during morning and evening prayer, and played music during Masses and between presentations by Franciscan theologians.



Sister Andrea's collaboration with Father Cyprian ensures that the daily liturgy will go smoothly.



In addition to practicing with the choir, Sister Andrea makes sure that each soloist is comfortable with her music.

Affirmation to Her Ministry

Sharing her musical gifts comes naturally to Sister Andrea, and the sisters in the congregation especially appreciate her ability to enhance their prayer lives through liturgical music. "I enjoy the fact that the liturgy is well put together and that Sister Andrea is able to orchestrate that with her musical background," Sister Elizabeth said. "I feel we're so blessed here because our liturgies are so good."

The sisters are also blessed to have Sister Andrea's assistance with planning funeral

liturgies for deceased relatives. She helps select music for funerals and prepares the program booklets. If requested, she sings or plays the organ or piano at funerals.

Sister Pat added that Sister Andrea brings the gift of affirmation to her ministry. "She recognizes each person's gifts and tries to tap them," Sister Pat said. "I find her very gentle and supportive. She is never critical of people."

Sister Andrea is also willing to help students in Sister Pat's classes at Neumann University gain a better understanding of

Franciscan and sacramental music. "I bring my students to Sister Andrea and she helps to wrap up the semester in a spiritual way," Sister Pat said.

Sister Pat added that Sister Andrea's sensitivity to prayer and to music has gifted the congregation. "We have all been enriched and we have grown in our liturgical knowledge and expertise," Sister Pat said. "Everyone in the congregation has been touched by her ministry. Her gift of being able to compose music, especially in the Franciscan tradition, inspires a lot of us."

Knowing she is instrumental in enriching the spiritual lives of the sisters, Sister Andrea finds her music ministry to be a humbling as well as rewarding experience. To sum it all up, she says, "When a liturgy clicks and the music is in sync with the homily, when the people are singing full throated and are enjoying what they are singing—that brings me great joy." ■

For more information or comments on this article, contact goodnews@osfphila.org.

Meetings and rehearsals ended, Sister Andrea takes time to practice—renewed by both the music and the quiet solitude of the chapel.



SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Everyone has within a piece of good news.

—Anne Frank (adapted)

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▲ For Jennifer DeLany, Candy Jeffries, Christina Mercandetti, and Rachel Venable, spring break provided both a chance to expand their knowledge of nursing procedures and an opportunity to appreciate a culture different from their own.

Spring Break in Laredo

Four senior nursing students from Neumann University spent the 2010 spring break in Laredo, Texas—not relaxing in the sun but as part of a student exchange program and collaboration between Neumann, Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), and Mercy Ministries of Laredo. The idea for the program grew out of a 2006 nursing faculty development presentation by Belva Gonzalez about TAMIU students. Dr. Nancy Laplante, Assistant Professor of Nursing at Neumann, found the presentation impressive and arranged a student exchange program for the 2010

spring break. After they arrived, the Neumann students shared previously researched presentations on health topics pertinent to the Mexican American population of Laredo. They heard presentations on immigration, human trafficking, and domestic violence; traveled down the Rio Grande River for a view of the border crossings; and engaged in clinical practice at several sites operated by Mercy Ministries. The exchange will continue in October when the TAMIU students visit Neumann.

Creating Beauty in Stained Glass!

After nine years of meticulous work, Sister Christopher Marie Wagner completed her work of restoring the stained glass windows in Our Lady of Angels Chapel. The process included removing, disassembling, cleaning, repairing, releading, and re-installing every window, regardless of size! Because the original enamels on the glass had, in many instances, deteriorated over the years, Sister Chris replaced about 40% of the windows—cutting new glass, applying new enamel, and firing each piece in the kiln to achieve the original colors. She also designed and created new windows for both the sacristy and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, as well as the chapel's new sanctuary lamp. Now that this massive restoration is completed, Sister Chris is pursuing her long-time interest in iconography. Using either egg tempera or acrylic, she is writing icons on various subjects, including the Holy Face, St. Mary Magdalene, the Trinity, the Tenderness Madonna, and Christ the Teacher.

▼ Sister Chris' restoration of the stained glass windows in Our Lady of Angels Chapel required painstaking attention to detail.



Days of Joy and Hope

August was not a month of “lazy, hazy days” at the motherhouse in Aston. In addition to the regular routine of retreats, a mini-Sabbath, and busy office schedules, August 2010 also witnessed large crowds of sisters coming to the Glen for the annual Gathering Day and vow ceremonies. This year Sister Rose Mary Eve Holter renewed her vows before 200 sisters and companions. The following day, more than 300 sisters, companions, family, and coworkers gathered once again in Our Lady of Angels Chapel to witness Sister Patricia Kerezsi's profession of perpetual vows. Both days were a witness to the many blessings the congregation has received over the years and of the gift of sisterhood that enriches our daily living.

◀ Sr. Patty knelt before the altar during the singing of the “Litany of the Saints.”



The newly expanded counseling facility allows St. Joseph Family Center to help meet the increasing needs in the Spokane community.

St. Joseph Family Center—Renewed

The ribbon-cutting ceremony at the newly opened counseling center at St. Joseph Family Center in Spokane, Washington, demonstrated the creativity of building on history to move into the future. Intent on meeting the needs of its clients, the center recently remodeled Barry House, one of the cottages used for children at the former Children’s Home. Renovations have provided the center’s counseling services with a more contained area, improved accessibility for clients with disabilities, and, through sound-proofing, ensured better client confidentiality. The ceremony also served as an appropriate time to introduce Sister Patricia Millen, the recently appointed executive director of the center.

Lending Hands and Hearts to Haiti

In May Sister Loretta Francis Mann, 82, was one of 14 people who traveled from Connecticut to Haiti with Father Thomas Sievel from St. Vincent DePaul Parish. Their plan—to share their hands and hearts with the folks at the Haitian Health Foundation. The group landed in Port-au-Prince and boarded a small plane for the trip to Jérémie. The territory was rough; the clinic where the group stayed had only cold water. Entire families made the trek to the clinic. Sister Loretta’s duties included going into the mountains with the dentist, sterilizing instruments, accompanying patients to the nurse, and feeding the children. She also spent time caring for the babies at the Mother Teresa Orphanage and talking with mothers at the Center of Hope Clinic about the benefits of good health. When Sister Loretta’s eight days ended, she was reluctant to leave. One of the many aspects of the experience that touched her heart was the great respect she had for the Haitian women and her love for the Haitian children. In fact, the ties Sister Loretta forged with the Haitian people are so strong that she is already scheduled to return in February.



▲ *Sister Loretta Francis Mann developed a strong bond with some of the children at the Mother Teresa Orphanage making it difficult for her to leave and eager to return to Haiti.*

AWARD SPOTLIGHT



A number of sisters have won awards of various kinds in recent months. **Sisters Ellen Eugene Callaghan and Michele O’Brien** received awards at the 50th anniversary celebration of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel High School in Baltimore, Maryland. Both sisters had taught at the school—each contributing to the development of the school’s curriculum and teaching

excellence. **Sisters Eleanor Horneman and Marietta Culhane** also received special honors in Maryland. The sisters were recipients of the St. John’s Prep Founder’s Medal Award for their years of service in Catholic education. In New Jersey **Sister Clare Agnes Conforti** received the Vivere Christus Medal for her work in the Diocese of Paterson. The award honors recipients for their “outstanding service to the Church of Paterson” and acknowledges a “life of vibrant faith and apostolic charity which proclaims the truth that ‘to live is Christ.’”



In Memoriam

- Sister Michael Joseph Herron
June 17, 2010
- Sister Anne Marie Kennealy
August 3, 2010
- Sister Bonnie Lee Pelloux
(formerly Sister LaSalette Marie)
August 5, 2010
- Sister Alice Mary Sturniolo
September 9, 2010

FoCUS

CHARLES ZEILER



Because Charlie appreciates his own education with the Sisters of St. Francis, he continues to use his gifts to support the mission.

“OVER THE YEARS I CAME TO APPRECIATE THE SACRIFICES MADE BY THE SISTERS WHO TAUGHT US.”

The words “Lux Tua Luceat,” (Matthew 5:16), appear on the seal for The Catholic High School of Baltimore. The words meaning, “So let your light shine before all that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven,” are an appropriate beginning for a focus on Charles Zeiler who recently became involved in the school sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis. Charlie evidenced a spirit of Franciscan stewardship when he visited the school and identified needed repairs and renovations. He then committed himself to make several capital improvements. His generosity made renovation of the school cafeteria, locker room, and gallery possible. He also provided laptop computers for teachers and netbooks for student use.

Charlie’s connection with the Sisters of St. Francis began in a Baltimore, Maryland, grade school. He believes “that the education I received at the Shrine of the Little Flower laid the groundwork for my advanced education. Over the years I came to appreciate the sacrifices made by the sisters who taught us.” Awareness of these sacrifices led Charlie to his first unsolicited gift to the Sisters of St. Francis Foundation, a gift which he considers a “down payment” for the future.

Responding to the needs of others is not new to Charlie. This awareness led him to develop a financial account specifically dedicated to education. The Johns Hopkins Hospital Nursing School was an early recipient of this fund. His wife Sandy had earlier received a full scholarship from the school, without which she could not have completed either her studies or a successful 35-year nursing career. Sandy’s scholarship deepened the couple’s sensitivity for those in need of assistance with education.

Charlie’s giving reached beyond the material when he accepted a position on the Sisters of St. Francis Foundation Board, a decision which both he and his wife feel supports his desire to remain involved with the congregation’s mission. Sister Mary Vandergeest, executive director of the foundation, enjoys the opportunity to work with Charlie, whom she calls “someone with a big heart who never puts himself first.” His light and his good works shining from within give glory to God in a spirit which is truly Franciscan.



▲ *Charlie and his wife Sandy have been married for 28 years and have one daughter, Ann.*

► *Charles Zeiler is pictured with Bishop Denis Madden who celebrated the Mass of the Holy Spirit with the Catholic High community.*



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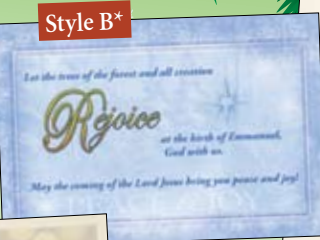
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Sister Linda Gets Published!

Unlike dissertations that live out their lives on a shelf, Sister Linda Sariego's grew into a book! Published by Scripta Humanistica, a publisher of scholarly works, *Dynamic Spaces in La Diana* by Jorge DeMontemayor is a study of a 16th century pastoral novel. Sister Linda's study illustrates how dynamic the work is. Unlike most pastoral novels which are whimsical, slow moving, and focused on shepherds lamenting lost loves, *LaDiana* features women as main characters in a dynamic and transformational setting. The environment or "space" actually serves as a character and interacts with the people in the novel, thus nudging them to be better and different people.



Sister Elsa Honored at the Franciscan Federation

One of the highlights of the Franciscan Federation's annual conference is the recognition of one person from each congregation whose life exemplifies the spirit of the conference theme. This year's conference, held in Buffalo, New York, focused on the theme "Passionately Embracing Gospel Living." The congregation's 2010 recipient was Sister Elsa Vazquez! Among the criteria established was the stipulation that the individuals should allow the light to shine through them with radiance, transparency, clarity, and optimism; that they should be a beacon of light to others, especially the marginalized; and that they should witness to the challenge and power of gospel values in daily living. Sister Elsa faithfully and consistently devotes herself to those who are poor, lonely, and marginalized. She has a great love for the Hispanic people and the elderly and is a loving, gentle presence to all those she encounters. One never meets her without being graced with her welcoming smile. Sister Elsa works at Assisi House, ministering to the needs of our retired sisters, as well as working with the Hispanic ministry in Delaware County—both in prayer gatherings and in home visits.



Sisters Elizabeth Kane (bottom row third from the left), Marie Angela Presenza (bottom row fourth from the left), and Elaine Martin (second row sixth spot) are three among the many sisters pictured here who were members of the choir in 1962. What makes them unique is the fact that they are still active members of the choir today. This group made up the majority of sisters who performed on the two congregational albums that were sold to raise money for the community (see left). Read more about the choir and the many contributions of Sr. Andrea Likovich, the music and liturgy coordinator, on page 12.