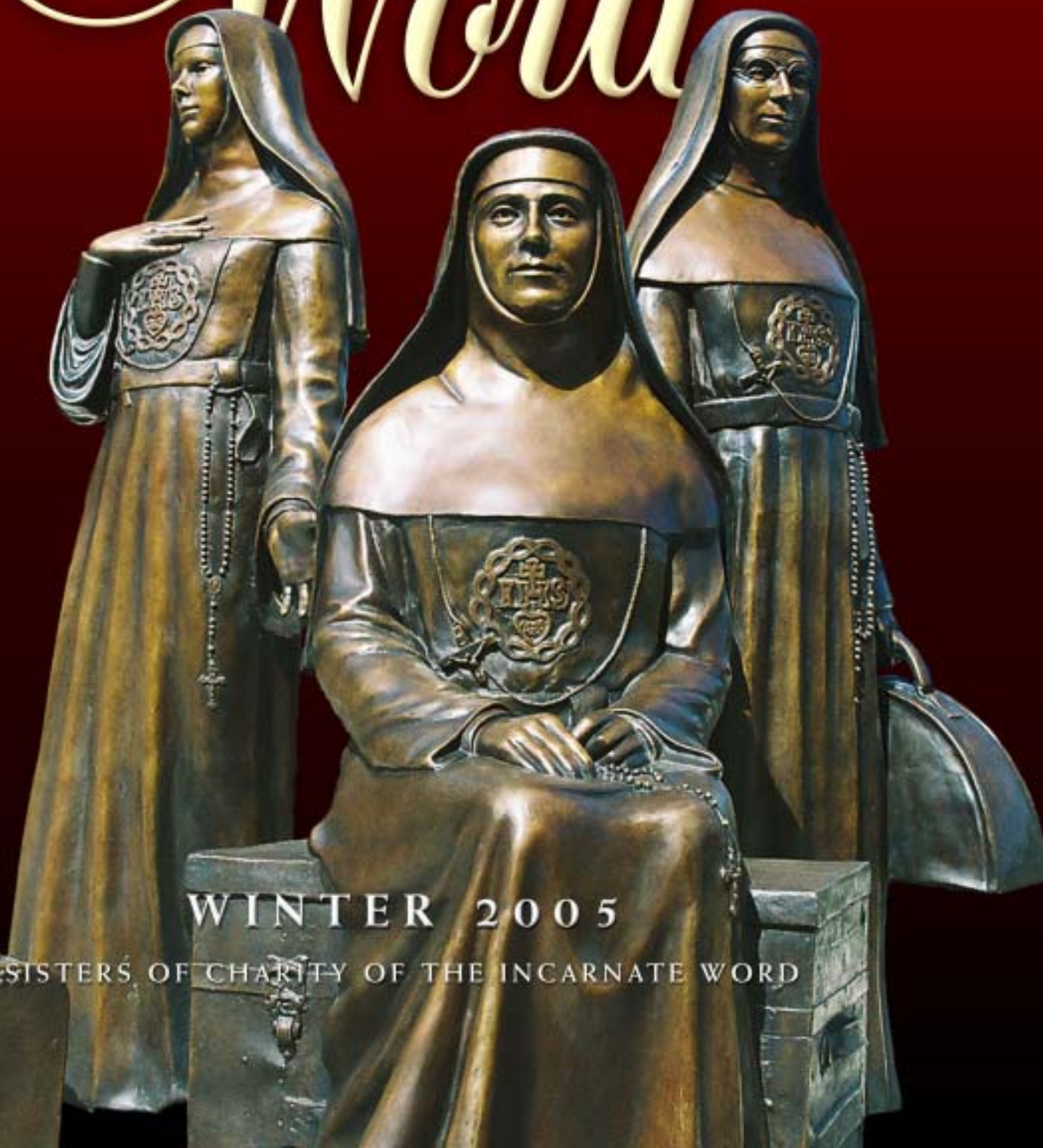


The *Word* Among Us



WINTER 2005

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

# ALIVE!

The cover of this issue of *The Word Among Us* is of the new statue at Villa de Matel depicting the arrival of our first three Sisters in Galveston. The statue, dedicated on Foundation Day, is an appropriate tribute to those brave Sisters and is a beautiful reminder of their response to the call of Bishop Claude Dubuis almost 140 years ago.



Our history is important to us and rightfully so. However, the foundational call of Bishop Dubuis is not merely history. It is as relevant today as it was in 1866. Jesus Christ still suffers “in the persons of a multitude of sick and infirm of every kind.” The needs of society may have changed, but the cries of those suffering have not. And, as in years past, our Sisters are there to care for others. Whether hopping on a motorcycle to help underprivileged children or joining a coalition to fight human trafficking, our Sisters are actively engaged in a variety of ministries in response to the founding call.

In a story by our friend Dr. Ben Raimer in Galveston, we see that the spirit of that founding call also lives in those who no longer co-minister with us but whose lives have been touched and enriched by our Sisters.

As we look to the future, it is also gratifying to know that women today continue to be called by Bishop Dubuis. The reflections by four of our novices on the charism of the Congregation, which appear in this issue, are a clear, bright sign that the call is alive and well.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sister Olive".

Sister Olive Bordelon  
General Superior

*The Word Among Us*

**The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Houston, Texas,**

publishes *The WORD Among Us* on a quarterly basis for our Sisters, CCVI Associates and friends. Through the words and pictures in each issue, we celebrate and give witness to the presence of God in our world as we share experiences from our ministries and our lives.

**TAMBIÉN ESTÁ DISPONIBLE EN ESPAÑOL**



**Editor**

Sr. Margaret Ann Toomey,  
CCVI

**Director of Communications**

Linda Macdonald

**Production Assistant and Spanish Translator**

Liana Fernández-Baca

Please send articles and photographs for inclusion in *The WORD Among Us* to Linda Macdonald at Villa de Matel, 6510 Lawndale Avenue, Houston, Texas 77023 or by E-mail to [lmacdonald@ccvi-vdm.org](mailto:lmacdonald@ccvi-vdm.org). Deadline for the Spring Issue is February 15, 2006.

Visit our website at  
[www.sistersofcharity.org](http://www.sistersofcharity.org).

# IN THIS ISSUE

## 4 Reflection on a ministry in Africa

The call of Bishop Dubuis resonates in Kenya.

## 10 Teaming with bikers

The Nun Run helped spread the spirit of giving.

## 14 Foundation Day

Hospital Sisters of Lyon join in special activities at Villa de Matel.

## 17 The Mission Continues

Dr. Ben Raimer writes about the legacy of our Sisters living on in Galveston.

## 20 What is the charism of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word?

First year novices in Nairobi share their reflections.



Page 24

## 24 Human trafficking

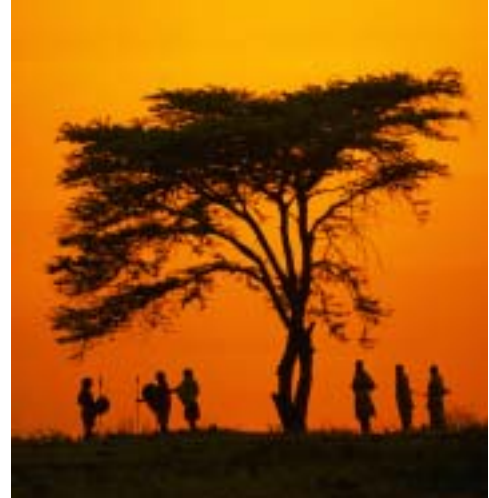
Our Congregation joins forces with a Houston-based initiative to bring public awareness to this version of modern day slavery.

## 26 Standing Columns

Briefs

Calendar

**Cover:** A new statue depicting the arrival of our first three Sisters in Galveston was unveiled and blessed at Villa de Matel on October 25th as part of Foundation Day activities. See story on Page 14.



Page 4



Page 14



Page 10



Page 17



Page 20

# REFLECTION ON A MINISTRY IN AFRICA

*Sister Francesca Kearns recently transferred from her ministry in Kenya as our Congregation's Vocation Animator. In the following interview, she reflects on her experiences with the people, culture and spirituality of Africa.*



**Q:** *How long were you in Africa?*

**A:** I was in ministry in Kenya, East Africa, for nine years. In the beginning I worked primarily in family life and with the young people. My work with the young people led me into vocation ministry, which had been my full time ministry for the last six years.

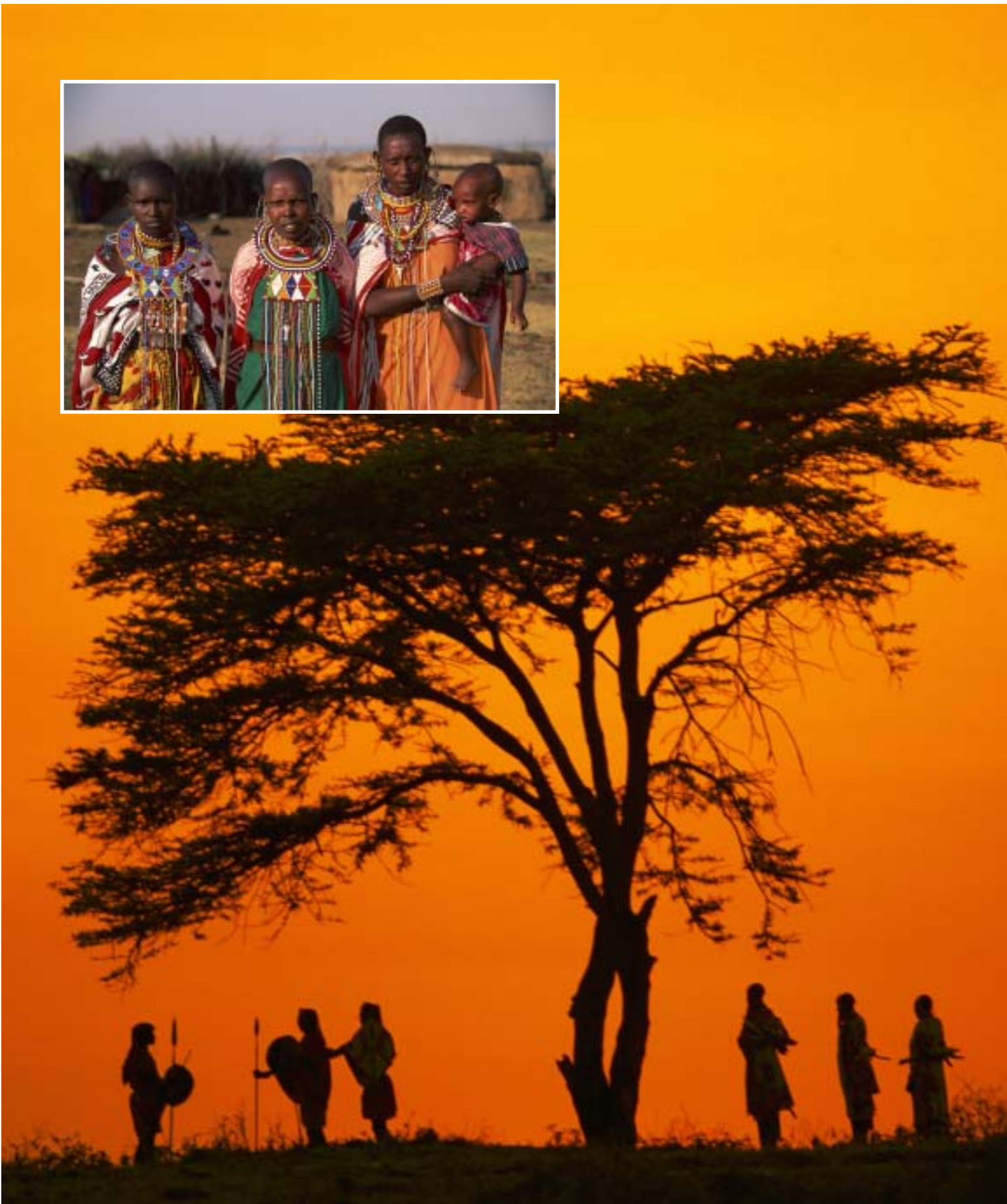
*How would you describe the people?*

Kenyans are a people of courage who share great hospitality. They also have deeply religious beliefs. Some may not be Catholic or even Christian, but they have a very deep sense that God has given us life and life is a gift. In terms of the acceptance of religious life, a family's strong religious beliefs might inspire them with

the feeling that they are giving a child back in thanksgiving to God for the gift of life. I once met a Muslim lady who had one son who served in the local mosque and another who was a catholic priest. She said that the important thing was that the both served the Man above.

*How did your ministry put you in contact with Kenyan families?*

Part of my work was to visit the families of young ladies who were considering religious life in our congregation. In some ways it is like the traditional custom of visiting the family of the prospective son or daughter-in-law. It is very important to do this for good communication, and clarification of expectations.



Life in Kenya is more family oriented than in our individualistic western culture. When a person makes a life decision, it is seen as influencing the family. The family also takes an active part in helping the young person make a good decision. Many times during the family visit, the grand parents will also be present and frequently a representative of the small Christian community. The families would show me their family pictures and I would share a copy of *The Word Among Us* with them. They are particularly interested when the articles are about Kenya or have pictures of our Kenyan members.

*Is there an interest in religious life among women in Kenya?*

There are a growing number of young women in Kenya who are looking at religious life. What is exciting is that it has only been about 100 years ago since the first missionaries went to Africa. Since the people of Kenya are very religious, they accepted that Word very seriously. Like Latin America, the parish works through the small Christian communities. Thus, when the person enters the seminary or religious life the community is involved. This means that other young people are aware of those who take the risk to join full time service in the church and they may be inspired to do the same. I say risk, because becoming a parent is a very important value, and it is a big sacrifice to give up that privilege that others may have life. But many of the candidates have the experience of how missionaries spent their lives giving life to their parishes and they now want to do the same.

The good news is that various congregations now have Kenyan members who are missionaries in other countries such as Colombia, Ireland and some of the more traditionally Catholic countries that now have fewer native vocations. The missionaries from Nigeria and Kenya are coming to make their contribution to these countries that helped them in their initial evangelization.

*Where is the novitiate?*

The novitiate is located in Karen, Nairobi and is called Saint Bakhita. The new building was dedicated on October 23, 2003 and is named in honor of a new Saint. The story of St. Bakita's life is beautiful, sad, but inspiring. As far as we know Josephine Bakhita was kidnapped into slavery at the age of eight and suffered a life of extreme pain, persecution and exhausting work. From her memories it is interpreted

that she was born in present day Sudan. She worked as a slave in Africa and then was fortunate to be sold to an Italian family. The Italian family recognized her right to freedom. She went with the family to Italy where she met the Canossian Sisters. The people she worked for went back to Sudan, but she chose to stay with the sisters. She was baptized and later joined the sisters. In the suffering of Christ, she found the comfort and an acceptance of the great suffering that she endured as a child particularly while she was a slave. Her story is very inspiring, and the video of her life is a favorite with our candidates

*Have you visited Sudan?*

Although I have never been there, I feel a great identification with Sudan. The stories that I hear from missionaries working there, remind me of El Salvador during the civil war. One of my great hopes is that some day, not too far away, we will minister in Sudan. There is a picture of St. Bakhita in the entrance of the novitiate: I always greet her with, "St. Bakhita, please send us to Sudan."

*You were also in ministry in Central America; however when you entered the Congregation, there were no ministries in Central America or Kenya. When did you first experience a calling for missionary work?*

I wanted to be a missionary before I wanted to be a Sister. I don't think I looked specifically at Africa or Central America. Actually, I was particularly attracted to China. For some reason, China always had a calling for me. I am grateful for the short periods that I was able to minister there.

*Are young women still being called?*

In Africa today, many young women are interested in religious life. I think it is because of the suffering of their people. They also see that the church has been concerned and has given a great deal of leadership in setting up hospitals and schools. For example, the Catholic Church organizes the best programs caring for patients with AIDS. The religious have been very creative in finding different ways of responding to the problem of AIDS. They are practically the only ones who have good educational programs on prevention. These ministries inspire the young people to serve their people in a similar way.

*How did you approach vocations?*

I always work from the basis of Christian vocation. I visited many secondary and tertiary schools promoting the idea of life as a gift and the need to make good decisions. We developed a pamphlet showing how making wise decisions about study and sexuality gave one freedom from AIDS, drugs and other problems. We encouraged the youth to have good friends, to pray and to take time to make good decisions about their lives. Most of the students do not have the opportunity for guidance and counseling so they are very receptive to our programs.

While we went to the schools to work with Young Catholic Students, YCS, many of the students including Muslims were eager to participate. From these general groups we had smaller groups with monthly follow up on vocation. We called these groups Vocation Seekers. We work with the readings from Scripture e.g. Luke 3:22 focusing on the fact that they are the beloved children of God and that God chose them to express his love for the world in a unique way. I always wanted them to be excited about the fact that everyone has a vocation or a special mission in life. God chose them for that mission.

We felt that this sense of dignity in life then gave a positive foundation from which to reflect on Christian vocation. When we had developed a basis for Christian vocation, we moved with a smaller group of students to look at religious vocations in general and CCVI vocation with those who felt attracted to serve with us. I would go around in circles and the biggest circle was Evangelization and then the second circle was Christian vocation and then the smaller circle was religious vocation and the central circle was religious vocation as a member of our congregation. Even at our seminars we worked with the Franciscan Brothers who are based beside us in Molo. We worked with the Holy Rosary Missionary Sisters. So we had mixed groups in our vocation seminars.

We worked hard to give the participants a good foundation in prayer, Christian living and the Sacraments as well as decision-making related to vocation choice. Our seminars promote student participation and decision-making. We usually had from 50 to 70 participants from our three congregations in these seminars.

Young people were glad to have the opportunity to study, to reflect and to pray. From these seminars students move to look at vocations to marriage, religious life and priesthood. Some of these students

became affiliates and then we worked with them more specifically on preparation for religious life. Some people looking at the Gospels see vocation as command, call or attraction. I saw it mostly as attraction.

*Driving around an unfamiliar country must have posed some dangers. Did you fear for your life?*

I have always thought that somehow my vocation is tied up with adventure. I like adventure. Every ministry I have had for the past 40 years has required travel in mostly uncharted terrain. When I was in ministry in Houston, I worked with 50 Catholic schools between Houston and Galveston; I found where I was going by asking. In Central America, I worked with community health, which included 21 parishes in the rural diocese of Huehuetenango. Some of the villages had paths passable only by an animal or a bike. I enjoyed the challenge of riding a motorbike through the Cuchumatanes with their spectacular views. Most of the time, I was lost, but the people were always very helpful. Half the time I barely understood the language. Even when I understood Spanish well, many of the rural areas used an Indian language. However, it is a very salutary experience for a missionary to realize that she is understood only about half of the time. So the question for me would be how could I do ministry without the adventure of unknown terrain?

When I first moved to Kenya, mostly I did not know where I was going and that was scary. Again from village to village there are different languages. We had a matata, which literally means a vehicle for more than 3 people. It is a small bus, usually a Nissan van. When I was lost, I would ask the Matatu driver how to get from here to the desired destination. They were very helpful and gave me good information and had a good sense of humor. So in the lost situations, I have discovered some very gracious people.

*So you used to drive around visiting people?*

Usually around Christmas time, I set apart two weeks for home visits. I visited the family before the young lady entered the affiliate program. I choose this time because it is not a time when we have programs and people are more likely to be at home. I really enjoyed sharing with the families. Most of them are at home during this season. There is time to just visit, and enjoy a family celebration. When our novices or annually professed sisters are with their families they



sometimes join me in the visits. In this way, the family gets to meet several members of the congregation. It is very encouraging for the candidate to meet someone from her own area who is already a member of our congregation.

*How did you adjust to the change in diet?*

I enjoyed Kenyan food. We had a typical food in the Kikuyu area which is called giteri and irio. I like the tea that Kenyans made with milk, and it is called chai. Many of the families knew that I liked chai so they frequently had a thermos of chai ready for me when I arrived. They were very gracious about remembering my likes and dislikes. They also have something that is similar to the tortilla; it is like a pancake, but not sweet, it is chipate. It is quite delicious for eating with food and can also be used as a dessert. In the area where we worked, lamb was fairly common. For special events a sheep or a goat might be killed, but in ordinary times a chicken is more common. Since I like animals, I didn't eat meat.

*How did you cope with the language barrier?*

I speak Kiswahili; the official language is English and that is what I spoke when I visited the schools. But when I visited the families, I used some Kiswahili. Most districts have a third language, which is called the mother tongue and varies from tribe to tribe. I went to a school to learn Kiswahili in Tanzania. The program was set up by the Maryknoll missionaries. They tried to give us a good orientation as to new situations that we might meet. We not only learned the language but also had speakers on culture.

The language school was in a rural area, and I would walk around and meet the people. That was a wonderful opportunity not only to practice the language but also to get to know the people in their homes and to understand their customs.

*In your ministries in Central America and Africa, did you see comparisons with the three founding Sisters of the Congregation?*

When I first went to Central America, I had just read Sister Loyola's book, *Serving with Gladness*, and I

found many parallels. I think I empathized with the first sisters coming to a country and not knowing the language. I remember being in CA and trying to learn a phrase so that if I got lost, I would know what to say. I had just arrived in Mexico and wanted to let the Sisters know that I arrived safely. I got out my phrase book and practiced to say, "Donde estan los correos?" meaning, "Where is the post office? I repeated it to myself all the way down the street. When I got close to the indicated place, I asked a police officer in my broken Spanish and he nicely responded in English, "It's around the corner."

In developing countries many needs demand an immediate answer. There are fewer alternatives. We do the best that we can with the supplies that we have at that time. As I read about our first Sisters, I think that their situations were similar to what we still face today in missionary situations. These unplanned situations require initiative and flexibility. One of the things that is difficult for us and I think for our early Sisters, is that at the end of the day, one feels that there is still so much more to be done. Our early sisters were sensitive to the suffering and responded with love. Sometimes they only had two fish and five loaves for the multitude. But they trusted God to do the rest. They still challenge us to take great risks in times of need. In developing countries there are always times of need.

*What about the needs that you recently saw in Kenya?*

There is a saying that in Kenya every person is either affected or infected by AIDS. In Kenya we tried to help through education, counseling, medical care, and foster care. So that is where I see the similarity with the first three sisters...coming to an unfamiliar area and focusing on the needs of the people as they are.

We are in Africa today, because of a commitment to the poor and sick. Maybe not always having the best plan, but having the heart to see suffering and let our hearts tell us what needs to be done and letting our head guide us and helping us to work with others.

Sometimes not knowing the language has an advantage because it makes us conscious that we need the help and the perspective of the local people. I can read a map and see the big cities, but when I get into the villages, there is no map, and then I have to ask help from the local people. We need to let the people express how they think the needs can be met and be generous in sharing our experience and resources with them also.

It is not what we do for the people; it is what we do with the people. And I think that ties into vocation

ministry. It is not that we have come and have all the answers or all the personnel, but that we need people to collaborate with us. There are many needs... so the situation creates the need for us to work in collaboration to meet the needs of the people as Jesus would.

*Is there one story that stands out and touches your heart?*

There are so many stories. Working in vocation work, I had an opportunity to deal with people on the deep level of their dreams for their lives and how that intersects with God's dream for them. I didn't specifically do vocation work for our congregation, but to help the young people search for meaning in their lives. Working on this level has been very inspiring.

There are two people. One is a young lady named Elizabeth who lived in a very distant area called Kabernet. When Elizabeth got to know our congregation she was teaching preschool. She wanted to finish her training before joining postulancy. When she had a school break, she immediately went for training. So she was either teaching or taking her in-service training. Just her steadfastness and courage to do that is very commendable. Since her training took place during the times that we have seminars she has not been able to attend. But I wrote a summary of the seminar. She always reviewed the summary with me and asked for clarifications. Two other ladies from that region started out with Elizabeth, but did not continue. That meant that she had to travel long distances alone. I was inspired by her commitment.

The second person is a young lady from Nigeria. She received our address from a priest who visited Sister Michael. And she wrote to me. I told her our congregation was not in her country, but I would like to continue to correspond with her and eventually we arranged an interview. She was in a university and her university had frequent strikes, so she was not able to finish her education as quickly as she had hoped. But we continued our correspondence over four years. During that time I visited with her once. I made a visit to her family and her school. As soon as she finished the university she wrote asking when she could come. When I met her at the airport, she cried. It was like meeting someone you didn't know in a strange country. She was from West Africa and she crossed the continent to come to a congregation in a country that she didn't know. I was very touched by her faith and steadfastness. I may share the history of the congregation with the candidates, but they are they

ones that show me that the spirit is alive. These two ladies have some of the courage and perseverance of our founding Sisters. As I write this, both of these candidates are now in postulancy and I hope that they become the founding Sisters of a new mission in Africa.

*Why do women become Sisters?*

Many times when a woman comes to me, she says she has seen a promotion by the congregation. It is interesting that the call of Bishop Claude Dubuis seems to resonate many of the young African women. For example, the affects of AIDS in Africa are tremendous and they see the opportunity to help those who are suffering. We work with the sick, the orphans and the abandoned. These are the people with the greatest needs today. Many young ladies recognize that they have better education and health than many. When they reflect on the goodness of God in their lives, they also think about sharing that gift with others. In Kenya, God is recognized as the source of life, so they are very touched by this gift God has given them. They come with the question: "How can I give something back for the goodness of life that God has given me?" These women find it exciting and inspiring to share their experience of God with others through religious life.





# Teaming with bikers to bring Christmas joy to children



*By Sister Rosanne Popp, MD  
Medical Director  
CHRISTUS Southwest  
Community Health Center*





“O h my goodness, it is that time of year again?” said Sister Marie Bernarde Clancy to a co-worker at CHRISTUS Southwest Community Health Center (CSWCHC) last November. Time for what? Time to start preparing for the annual Christmas Party for the children of CSWCHC!

The clinic offers Christmas cheer to families who otherwise might have little in the way of gifts for their children during the holiday season. The annual event (now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year), treats about 500 children to a variety of holiday offerings. It is a progressive party of sorts, starting with registration, drawings for door prizes, and then

moving on to pictures with Santa. After that it is on to arts and crafts where the little ones, assisted by Santa’s elves, make decorations for their Christmas trees. The children and their families then enjoy refreshments and entertainment with cartoon characters singing and dancing. The final stop is Santa’s toy closet where a gift certificate for Mom, and toys for the children await.

The CHRISTUS Associates take pride in preparing for the party. The staff divides itself into committees that plan for the various parts of the very special

event. Much time and energy is devoted to selecting and pre-assembling the arts and crafts projects, developing a menu that is tasty and nutritious, and readying Santa’s workshop for those all important photos. Clinic decorations and gift selections become major agenda items.

Have you ever thought about how many shopping carts it might take to buy gifts for 500 children?

Now, you might ask yourself: How does a mission clinic such as CHRISTUS Southwest Community Health Center have the resources to undertake such a grand endeavor? The short answer to the question is **GENEROSITY**. Many CHRISTUS

partners, such as CHRISTUS St. Joseph Hospital and Bridgestone Support Office, have toy drives for the children. The Associates and community members join together to volunteer their time and talents to make the party a success. Our own Congregation likewise supports the Christmas party with a generous grant. So all systems seem to be in place to bring some joy into the lives of these children and their families.

But wait! What is that noise? Is it Santa's reindeer? A helicopter? No, it is the sound of *motorcycles!* Lots of them...raising more money to include more children in the Christmas festivities. And this is how it came about.

'Twas the month before Christmas when the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word and the Retreads Motorcycle Club teamed up for the first annual Nun Run, a police-escorted motorcycle ride from Houston to Galveston. The event was the brainchild of Sister Deenan Hubbard and myself, with generous helpings of ideas from Sister Deenan's brother Teddy, a Harley enthusiast from California; Vince Hefley, a St. Joseph volunteer and member of the Retreads; Linda Macdonald, the Congregation's Communications Director; and John Greer, Director of Major Gifts for the St. Joseph Foundation. Together we conceived the idea of teaming up the Sisters with the motorcycle riders to raise funds for the children. Nuns on motorcycles, who wouldn't pay to be a part of that!

And after months of planning and a few detours (Hurricane Rita being a major one), the event was set; registration forms mailed, donor requests sent, banners, bandanas, lapel pins and trophies ordered. The route from Villa de

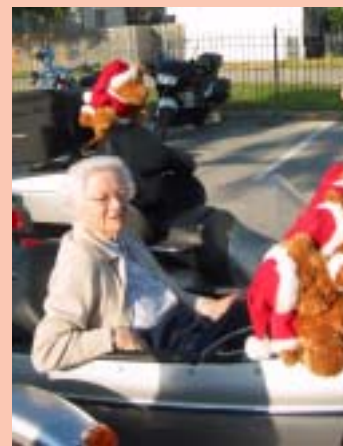
Matel in Houston to Kathy's Katerers, a banquet hall in Galveston was carefully marked out and meals were selected. Again, many CHRISTUS Associates and community volunteers came together to make the event a reality.

The Sisters from the various Villa communities welcomed the guests, joined them for breakfast and enjoyed being taken for rides around the Villa grounds. For many of the Sisters, it was their first time on a motorcycle (but not likely their last). And for many of the riders it was the first time to see a nun up close and personal.

After a blessing by Father Salvadore, two nun-filled convertibles and 54 motorcycles headed for Galveston. Once there, the Sisters and cyclists enjoyed a lunch of burgers and dogs. After lunch there was an auction and trophies in various categories were awarded.

The conclusion: The first annual Nun Run was an extremely successful and fun-filled day with over \$8,000 being raised for the children's party. That money enabled the staff at CSWCHC to add about 100 more children to their party roster. And, yes, plans are already being made for the 2006 Nun Run.

And so begins another chapter in the CSWCHC's endeavor to bring the real Spirit of Christmas into a little corner of the world. The generosity of so many people sharing of themselves to bring joy to others speaks of the real meaning of Christmas. In some small manner the Word made flesh is being manifest to all, the givers and the receivers alike...because for many it is in the giving that the greatest gift is received.





**Thanks to our sponsors:**  
 Retreads Motorcycle Club  
 Mandola's Gulf Coast Kitchen  
 CHRISTUS Health Gulf Coast Region  
 Minute Maid, Houston's Hometown Juice  
 Deloitte and Touche  
 Wild West Honda  
 CHRISTUS Health  
 CHRISTUS St. Joseph Hospital.



# At Villa de Matel

# FOUNDATION DAY



By Sister Margaret Ann Toomey

**R**eflecting on our pioneering story can bring us back to Jesus’ Greatest Commandment, “Love God and love your neighbor.” We can hear the strains of this admonition in Matthew 25:40, in Bishop Dubuis’ foundational call and in Mother Jeanne de Matel’s mission of being a “Gospel of Love.”

We may have often wondered about the response our first three Sisters, Blandine, Joseph and Ange, gave to Bishop Dubuis’

request for missionaries to accompany him to Texas. We may have asked, “What inspired these young women to leave home and journey to an unknown land?”

Perhaps the answer lies in the significant relationship between our foundational call and the charism of the Hospital Sisters of Lyon; a charism born in the Gospel promise, “As often

On October 25, 2005, Foundation Day activities at Villa de Matel included the dedication of a large sculpture representing the arrival of our first three Sisters and the blessing of the reconstructed grotto with Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza of the Diocese of Galveston – Houston officiating.

The new statue, located outside the Heritage Center, depicts the Sisters having just arrived in Galveston from France. With their bags and a chest, the Sisters pause, two standing and one sitting, as they prepare to begin new lives and a new congregation in the rowdy, bustling port city. The statue was designed by Pilar Cortella

de Rubin, sculptor. Eric Kaposta and Richard Koci assisted as contributing artists. The statue was made at Art Foundry, Michael Carpino, owner.

The Grotto of Lourdes where St. Bernardine Subaru saw the Immaculate Conception has been replicated on the Motherhouse grounds since the earliest days of St. Mary’s Infirmary in Galveston. Six years ago the grotto at Villa de Matel was in need of repair and was dismantled. Through a most generous gift in loving memory of Dorothy and Helen Blalock, a new grand grotto was built. Construction was completed in time for rededication on Foundation Day.

Sister Lucille Desmond coordinated both projects from inception to completion.

---

*Pictured top right on opposite page, Sr. Andree Flandin and Sr. Francoise Cluzel of France pose with Sr. Olive Bordelon, while below, Sculptor Pilar Cortella de Rubin and Sr. Lucille Desmond pause for a photograph after the dedication. Photographs by Peter Odell.*





as you do it to one of these little ones, you do it to me.” Matt. 25:40. It was these Gospel words which in 1665 inspired the first two Hospital Sisters of Lyon to

approach their hospital rector with their intention of caring for the sick all their lives solely for the love of God. Did our three founding Sisters hear the words which Bishop Dubuis wrote to Mother Angelique? It is certainly not difficult to see the connection between Matthew 25:14 and our foundational call, “ Our Lord Jesus Christ suffering in the persons of a multitude of sick and infirm of every kind, seeks relief at your hands.” Did Sisters Blandine, Joseph and Ange associate these two messages and carry them in their hearts to the Monastery of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament where they were reemphasized for them when Mother Angelique, IWBS told them of Jeanne de Matel’s challenge to be “Gospels of Love”?

Our 2005 Foundation Day celebration gave us a unique opportunity to see more connections between our own story and that of the Hospital Sisters (of Our Lady of Compassion) of Lyon, when two members of their Leadership Team, Sisters Francoise Cluzel, General Superior, and Andree Flandin, General Councilor, with their translator, Alain Cluzel, were with us October 19<sup>th</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup>. We noted a clear resonance with our incarnational charism when the Sisters explained their understanding of “Hospitality” as living in a fully evangelical manner “...made up of love and service. Through the person cared for or left uncared, recognized or unknown, it is Christ, it is God in person whom we are caring for or leaving uncared.” Constitutions 14; Hospitalieres de Notre Dame de Pitie de Lyon.

In sharing our own understanding of hospitality, we invited the Sisters to visit our communities and ministries in the Houston area. They also visited the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio. On October 24<sup>th</sup> they participated with our Leadership Team and that of San Antonio CCVI and Divine Providence in the dedi-

cation of a plaque honoring Bishop Dubuis in the church which he built in Castroville.

Our 2005 Foundation Day celebration was made more memorable in having Sisters Francoise and Andree present with us for Eucharist and for the dedication of the sculpture of our first three Sisters. It was indeed an emotional moment for us when we heard Sister Francoise read our founding story from *Serving with Gladness*. We thanked God for Sisters Blandine, Joseph and Ange and prayed that together we, The Hospital Sisters (of Our Lady of Compassion) of Lyon and Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Houston, will continue to incarnate the Gospel as they did.

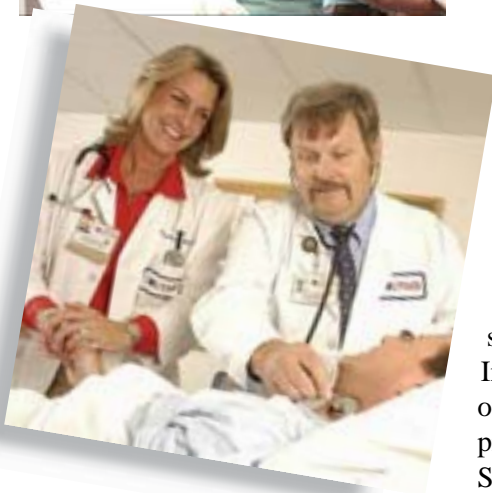


*The Hospital Sisters of Lyon and our Congregation’s Leadership Team: Sr. Deenan Hubbard, Sr. Margaret Bulmer, Sr. Andree Flandin, Sr. Kevina Keating, Sr. Francoise Cluzel, Sr. Lillian Anne Healy, and Sr. Olive Bordelon.*



# The Mission Continues

By Ben G. Raimer, M.D.  
Vice President for Community Outreach  
The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston



*Today the spirit of the three founding Sisters, as well as all who followed, lives on through those who have been touched and inspired by our Sisters, and who share the value of service above self at Galveston's medical center.*

When St. Mary's Hospital closed its doors in 1997, the city of Galveston and the citizens of Galveston County lost a valuable health care and community service resource. However, the legacy and generosity of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word continue throughout the county through the many projects and collaborations that the Sisters began and have helped sustain. These community partnerships are addressing the desires of people in need throughout our communities.

Recognizing the value of partnership and collaboration, Dr. John D. Stobo, president of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB), created the Office of Community Outreach in 1999. While the traditional missions of academic health science centers included the generation of knowledge through research, the application of that knowledge through the provision of clinical care, and the education of current and future generations of learners, Dr. Stobo also recognized the need for the community to be included in all aspects of those roles.

The inclusion of "community" among UTMB's other core values

of service, innovation, education and diversity speaks to the many similarities in mission shared by both UTMB and the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Both organizations have been focused, since inception, on improving access to health care, promoting medical education, providing the highest quality of health care and, most especially, service to the poor and underserved.

Galveston has always been a diverse and complex community. Today, as in years past, the city



faces many challenges as many of our neighbors live in poverty. However, the community continues

its search for solutions that will improve the standard of living and the opportunities available to all of its citizens.

As vice president of community outreach at UTMB, I have been fortunate to lead the university's efforts in a number of these community collaborations. The UTMB Office of Community Outreach (OCO) is home to a number of programs that create opportunities for promoting good health, enhancing educational prospects and improving access to health care.

Through the East Texas Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), we provide programs designed to improve the health of communities through development of a quality health workforce and by addressing unmet health needs in 111 Texas counties, representing a population of over 14 million Texans. AHEC promotes health literacy and the development of community health systems. AHEC also supports the placement of health professions students from various universities in Texas into rural settings to provide health care for the underserved.

Through our Office of County Affairs we also provide contracted health care services for indigent patients from over 40 Texas counties. Last year, UTMB provided over \$27 million in care for these patients who had no access to care in their local communities.

A major part of our resources are also directed to the promotion of nursing education. Nearly 10 years ago the UTMB Work School Program was founded to assist UTMB employees in furthering their education and their careers. Work School allows UTMB

employees to complete their GED if needed, get their LVN or associate's degree in nursing from Galveston College, earn a BS-RN at UTMB, or earn advanced degrees.

To date, over 800 individuals have completed the Work School Program, providing new nurses and health care professionals for UTMB and surrounding health centers. Two years ago, the Greater Houston Partnership supported the implementation of the program in the Texas Medical Center and dozens of sites in the greater Houston area.

The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word have always recognized the importance of community



health promotion. Likewise, UTMB values the development of model health programs for the communities we serve. Most recent efforts in this arena brought the community together in new and innovative ways.

Four years ago, UTMB formed a coalition comprising faith-based organizations (CHRISTUS Our Daily Bread, St. Vincent's House, the Jesse Tree, the Luke Society

and others), the Galveston County Board of Health and 4C's Clinics, Mainland Medical Center, and multiple advocacy groups throughout the county, including the Galveston County Medical Society. Advocating for increased access to health care and decreased health disparities was the mission of this collaboration, which became known as the Galveston County Health Access Program (Galveston CHAP).

Galveston CHAP submitted a grant proposal to the Health Resources Services Administration Bureau of Primary Health Care (HRSA) that was funded in the amount of \$1.9 million. The three-year grant enabled the enhancement of the health infrastructure throughout Galveston County. The story of Galveston CHAP's success is detailed on its web site, [www.galvestonchap.org](http://www.galvestonchap.org), but in brief, the 21-member coalition:

- Increased opportunities for individuals to establish and maintain a medical home and to receive education regarding health care services available throughout the county
- Won national recognition by Community Campus Partnerships for Health in 2004 as the nation's most outstanding community health program.
- Brought nearly \$2 million to Galveston County in the form of additional grants, including \$250,000 from the Office of Minority Health for St. Vincent's Episcopal House, a grant from Ronald McDonald Charities to fund playground and exercise equipment for children who are prone to obesity, and \$265,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to provide a dynamic diabetes education program for hundreds of Galveston residents



*Dr. Ben Raimer, to left, with Sisters and UTMB staff during last year's tour of the former St. Mary's Hospital.*

This same coalition, along with many new members, seized the opportunity to form a mental health task force to investigate opportunities for addressing the profound mental health care needs among residents of Galveston and Brazoria counties. Initially the task force assisted in securing \$100,000 from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health/Mental Retardation and another \$100,000 for the 4C's Clinics to begin a mental health case management program. As that program got under way, the task force moved forward to apply for a second grant from HRSA.

In September 2005, HRSA awarded an additional \$1.6 million to the collaborative for the development of new mental health resources that will include a jail diversion program, a community-based psychiatric intervention program and case management services, along with a "mobile" mental health intervention team to bring care to patients wherever they are.

Coinciding with the application for the second HRSA grant was

substantial growth of Galveston County's school-based teen health clinics that are partially supported by UTMB; a significant increase in immunization programs (more than 75,000 shots); and a rise in the community health promotion efforts in the form of health fairs, educational programs and community health events.

The creative efforts of many citizens in the community lead to the formation of the Galveston Families, Children and Youth Board (FCY) in 2003. The 35-member board, founded by B.J. Herz, Sylvia Joiner and other concerned citizens, took an aggressive stance to improve Galveston one neighborhood at a time beginning with the Rosenberg School Renaissance Zone located just blocks away from the former St. Mary's Hospital and the UTMB campus.

More than 80 blocks within the Rosenberg Zone underwent tremendous revitalization focusing on education, safety, health and city infrastructure. That project's initial success led to the formation of the

L.A. Morgan School Renaissance Zone and most recently the San Jacinto School Renaissance-Zone. The focus of the FCY collaborative is on:

**Education**—improving students' educational performance through mentoring and home intervention with parenting classes

**Health**—improving the family's health status through routine health screening, education and health fairs

**Safety**—improving the safety of the neighborhoods through crime watch and enhanced policing, installation of better lighting, provision of handicapped access, and other interventions

**Infrastructure**—improving major neighborhood infrastructure, including city parks and playground equipment, improved streets and litter cleanup

**Youth**—developing youth leadership training.

The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word left a legacy of caring for your "first community" that has permeated the fabric of Galveston for nearly 140 years. As this community looks forward to its future, having been spared the ravages of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, that same concern and spirit continue to shine throughout the county—a glowing tribute to the indomitable spirit of the three original Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word who struggled so diligently to establish an infirmary and orphanage in Galveston. Indeed their community spirit continues to grow as their mission lives on in us.

St. Mary's Hospital may be "closed" in a physical sense, but in spirit, the mission lives through those who have been blessed to be touched by others who value service above self.

# What is the charism of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word?

During their first year of Novitiate,  
Sisters shared their reflections  
in answer  
to that very question.



# LOVE

*By Sister Monicah Ng'ang'a*

For me, being a gospel of love is a life-consuming task. Just as Jesus first hearers grew in their understanding of the word *love*, so do I.

At first I thought that the love of God should be directed to him through prayers and keeping the Ten Commandments, but now I have come to know that God lives within me and among us. He is located in my life and in my heart. I respond to the love of God every time I accept God's plan for me and for others.

Finding that God loves broken, sinful, miserable me has been a continuing experience, which has helped me to understand that I don't have to do anything to earn God's love since his love for me is unconditional. Likewise, I can't do anything to lose that love since it is steadfast. This moves me to respond by handing over my life into God's care and giving him power over it.

In order for me to be a gospel of love, that love should start within me. I must accept that the combination of qualities, values, talents, abilities and weaknesses that I am, is a package that has never been put together before. It is through this acceptance that the words of Jesus in the gospel of Mathew 11: 28-30 become alive in me. "Come to me all you who labour and are burdened and I will give you rest, take my yoke and learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart and you will find rest for yourself for my yoke is easy and my burden light." Being a gospel of love is choosing to enter into the paschal events of my own time. Accepting the different situations that I find myself in as my journey continues to unfold.

Loving God is not a private affair between God and me. It has a social dimension. It means I am not only at one with myself and with God but also at one with the world around me. I am to be at one with my sisters and brothers who are a gift from God, and representatives of God's love. Mathew: 22:34-40 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with your entire mind. And your neighbor as yourself." Jesus calls me to extend my love to all people.

*Novices pictured left to right are: Sisters Edith Wasiki Bulubisi, Monica Magure Ng'a'nga, Hellen Chepkurui Koskei and Angeline Obonyo.*

Simplicity and dependence help me to grow towards being a gospel of love. In my life I have learned to depend on God always and especially during my difficult moments. This awareness of my own brokenness has helped me to create a strong bond with God and with other people and especially those who are suffering. And as St Paul said in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to the Corinthians, I am content with my weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and constraints for the sake of Christ for when I am weak then I am strong." I too have seen my weaknesses being the best channels in which the love of God has become manifest in my life. This has helped me to accept others in their weaknesses.

In simplicity, I have learned to live simply so that others may simply live by sharing who I am and accepting the other as they are.

The words of Bishop Dubuis, "Our Lord Jesus Christ suffering in the persons of a multitude of sick and infirm of every kind seeks relief at your hands" remain a challenge to me. This calls me to love Jesus who is incarnated in the life of all and especially the poor and the suffering.

Loving is not easy but God who has given me the call to love gives me the graces that I need to live that call even when it is not easy.

# JOYFUL SERVICE

*By Sister Angeline Obonyo*

Charism is a gift given to an individual or a group by the Holy Spirit for the benefit of others. Through the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, I have come to understand one aspect of our charism as joyful service.

Joyful service to me means, doing any service wholeheartedly, service to self and to others. So how can I serve joyfully? To serve joyfully, is to be attentive to my inner needs. To be aware of how and what my soul wants at any given time. This demands that I should have quiet time for meditation and examination of my conscience. When I attend myself well, then I will be able to render that joyful service to the rest of humankind. Thus, a gospel of love.

In the past I denied myself joyful service, thinking that this is the best way to show love. It is therefore a great challenge for me nowadays to pay attention to

my needs. Bearing in mind our Founder's words: "Our Lord Jesus Christ suffering in the multitude of the sick and infirm of every kind seeks relief at your hands," keeps me remembering that my service is for the sake of Jesus suffering in all kinds. It is an encouragement for ministering to the sick, the poor, the aged and the deprived or neglected. This is not easy, but with God's help and the example of Bishop Dubius' great faith, and his unflagging courage in facing difficulties and disappointments, I have energy to yearn to give a joyful service in whatever I am doing.

I am just learning to be patient with those who can't go at my pace, and to allow others to express their desires and values. I am also trying to be available to those who need my service and also to offer my gifts the best I can. I am trying to be generous in sharing all that I have and to allow others to share what they also have. I am trying to be as simple as possible; another aspect of CCVI charism. I can easily exercise my gift of hospitality through the many opportunities I get everyday in this community.

I still continue to pray that through the guidance of the Father by the gift of the Holy Spirit, I will continue growing in understanding and living my call.

My dream is that whatever my service, I can do it as if I was doing for Jesus in person. Our charism has been handed down since our foundation through, hospitals, schools and orphanages, where those who suffer receive this joyful service. At present, I experience the charism in our communities whereby, we try to help each other joyfully. We are also trying to read the "signs of our time" to know where our services are most needed. The best guide for me is to embrace the gospel and try to live it fully.

## **REACHING OUT**

*By Sister Hellen Koskey*

To begin with, charism is a gift given by God to an individual or group for service in the church. Each of us shares in the charism according to our gifts. I feel called to share it generously with those people with whom I live and those I work with, it is also calling me to love them uniquely.

God's love to me is unconditional, so in order for me to be a gospel of love, love itself should start within me. I must accept myself the way I am, accept my strengths as well as my weaknesses. Thus through this self-acceptance, I will understand that **CHARISM** is a gift that continues to grow, and through my prayer I nourish that growth.

At times, I can be facing challenges and encountering difficulties, but once my energies are centered on my desire to serve God and attract others to join Him in that service I feel encouraged. I depend totally on Him by being humble and simple and devout myself in my relationship to Jesus, the Incarnate Word Among Us.

As I was reflecting on Luke 15:11-32, I saw that God the Father respects human freedom, God keeps waiting, he does not force us even when we have gone astray, and this revealed to me God's attitude, God does not love only the just or repentant sinners, God loves all unconditionally. So, I am also called to imitate Jesus Christ by extending the Incarnation of the Word without measure, I am called to give it wholeheartedly, to offer joyful service always. In doing so, I am reminded of the words from Matthew's gospel, "Do to others what you would like them to do unto you"

Lastly, remembering the words of Bishop Dubuis, "Our Lord Jesus Christ Suffering in the persons of a multitude of sick and infirm of every kind, seeks relief at your hand." I feel called to reach out to the poor, sick, and oppressed and those rejected in the society, through me, hopefully, they will experience God's love and be ready to turn to our Suffering Christ for their strength. I can't do this by myself; I need God's grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order for me to serve joyfully.

## **A GIFT GIVEN**

*By Sister Edith Bulubisi Waskie*

Charism is a gift given to an individual or group for service in the church. It is a way of life in each religious community. This charism grows through practice by living and accepting it as a gift. It is what helps me to know where I belong because if I am not attracted to a particular charism, it is impossible for me to live it.

The spirit of the congregation, our way of serving Christ is simplicity, joyful service, charity, dependence and hospitality. Becoming a CCVI calls me to on-going growth in the spirit of this congregation.

According to the history of the congregation, our first sisters responded to the words of Bishop Dubuis, "Our Lord Jesus suffering in the persons of the multitude of the sick and infirm of every kind seeks relief at your hands." They worked in hospitals and schools, helping the poor and caring for the orphans.

Today I also live the same words. I try to see the suffering Jesus in me and other people inside and outside of community. It has helped me to understand that Jesus is present in everybody and if one person is suffering then its Christ. It has helped me to appreciate others the way they are because despite their weakness Christ is present in them.

The personal charism that I find within myself is joyful service. I find myself more comfortable and happy in serving rather than being served. My joy comes when I serve the whole community with my whole heart not as a duty but through love. I am also trying to let others serve me so that I can balance my life. I am growing in being more comfortable in being served.

Furthermore, the spirit of simplicity is growing in me. I try to say what I mean, live what I say and share what is inside me. I am learning to share and use well what is available without grabbing what I want, but trying to have only what I need.

In addition, I am growing in the gift of dependence. I completely depend on what the community provides and above all I depend on God for direction in whatever I do. What I need most is to have an intimate relationship with God, which gives meaning of my life.

The spirit of hospitality has been very hard because I am not a very outgoing person. It is not easy for me to welcome a person, even a Sister I don't know and just sit and chat with her. I always find myself strained. I can talk better in a group than by myself. Fortunately, the example that I have seen from the Sisters in the community has really pushed me to practice hospitality and I have found out that it is not as hard as I thought. Although I am not the best I try it most of the time and I feel I am growing.

Lastly, the spirit of charity comes easily most of the time except when I need to be by myself. Sometimes I find it very hard to help if my heart or conscience is not present. When I work from this feeling inside me I don't take it as generosity. But I am

learning to sacrifice what I value and reach out to other people who need my hands. Many times I have been able to help those who need my help when asked and other times I can see the need.

Living in community, the spirit of CCVI has helped me to identify my charism and to try to practice it in as many ways as possible. Some have been coming naturally but others through struggle. I have been able to recognize some of the spirit present in me through feedback from the community members. I continue to look for opportunities to practice CCVI charism. It is through this gift that I have been able to help others in the community.

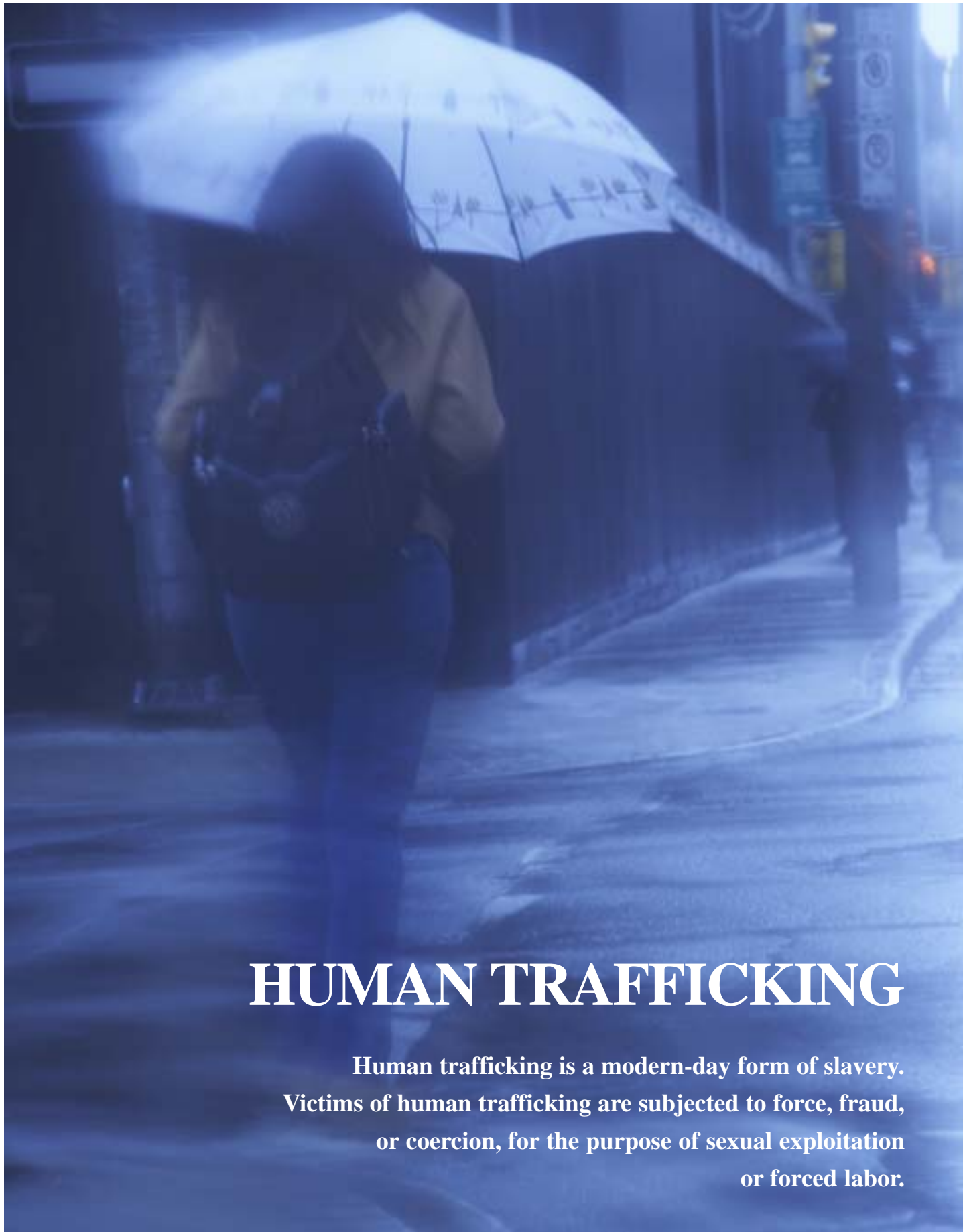
The spirit of CCVI has helped me to live the words of Bishop Dubuis by helping the suffering Jesus in others. It has drawn me to respect every human being's dignity. To live as gospels of love, I desire to do everything through love and always serve with gladness.

From my experience, the charism does not come automatically. It is a lifetime process. It needs identification and developing, it manifests itself in day-to-day living, but if I am not aware of it, I will not develop it personally.

In conclusion, I cannot live according to the charism, even though it matches my own, without God's grace. I now understand that it is through living it in every day life that the charism can be part of me.

*The novices hope to hear from you, especially our Sisters willing to share their understanding of the charism and be part of the on-going formation of the Kenya novices.*

*Emails are welcomed at [stchaths@mitsuminet.com](mailto:stchaths@mitsuminet.com).*



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Victims of human trafficking are subjected to force, fraud, or coercion, for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor.**

**V**ictims are young children, teenagers, men and women. After drug dealing, human trafficking is tied with the illegal arms industry as the second largest criminal industry in the world today, and it is the fastest growing.

Approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims annually are trafficked across international borders worldwide, and between 14,500 and 17,500 of those victims are trafficked into the U.S.A., according to the U.S. Department of State. These estimates include women, men and children. Victims are generally trafficked into the U.S. from Asia, Central and South America, and Eastern Europe. Many victims trafficked into the United States do not speak and understand English and are therefore isolated and unable to communicate with service providers, law enforcement and others who might be able to help them.

Prior to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), no comprehensive law in the United States existed to protect victims of trafficking or to prosecute their traffickers. The TVPA is intended to prevent human trafficking overseas, to increase prosecution of human traffickers in the United States, and to protect victims and provide Federal and state assistance to certain victims so that they can rebuild their lives in the United States. Victims of human trafficking who are not U.S. citizens are eligible for a special visa and can receive benefits and services

through the TVPA to the same extent as refugees. Victims of trafficking who are U.S. citizens may already be eligible for many benefits due to their citizenship.

TVPA defines “Severe Forms of Trafficking in Persons” as:

**Sex Trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is

induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years; or

**Labor Trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.



Our Congregation, along with the Houston Dominicans, The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, and 25 other local organizations have formed the Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition. The main purpose of the Coalition is to get information out to the public and raise everyone’s awareness of the issue. The initiative, implemented by Steven Wagner, Director of Trafficking in Persons Program, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, was launched November 16, 2005.

As a beginning about 30 packets of the Rescue and Restore information was mailed to the Mission Effectiveness Directors at CHRISTUS Health. There will be a training workshop in the future for medical personnel to help them recognize trafficked persons.

If you think you have come in contact  
with a victim of human trafficking,  
call the  
**Trafficking Information  
and Referral Hotline  
1.888.3737.888.**

This hotline will help you determine if you have encountered victims of human Trafficking, will identify local resources available in your community to help victims, and will help you coordinate with local social service organizations to help protect and serve victims so they can begin the process of restoring their lives. For more information on human trafficking visit [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking).

# Briefs

## PLAQUE HONORS BISHOP DUBUIS

A memorial plaque honoring Bishop Claude M. Dubuis was blessed October 24, 2005, at the Castroville “Old” church in Castroville, Texas. Bishop Dubuis was the first resident priest in Castroville from 1847 until 1853. In addition to the founding of our Congregation, he also invited the Sisters of Divine Providence to establish their Motherhouse in Castroville in 1868, and founded the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio in 1869.

The two visiting Hospital Sisters of Lyon, France, Sisters Andree Flandin and Sr. Francoise Cluzel,



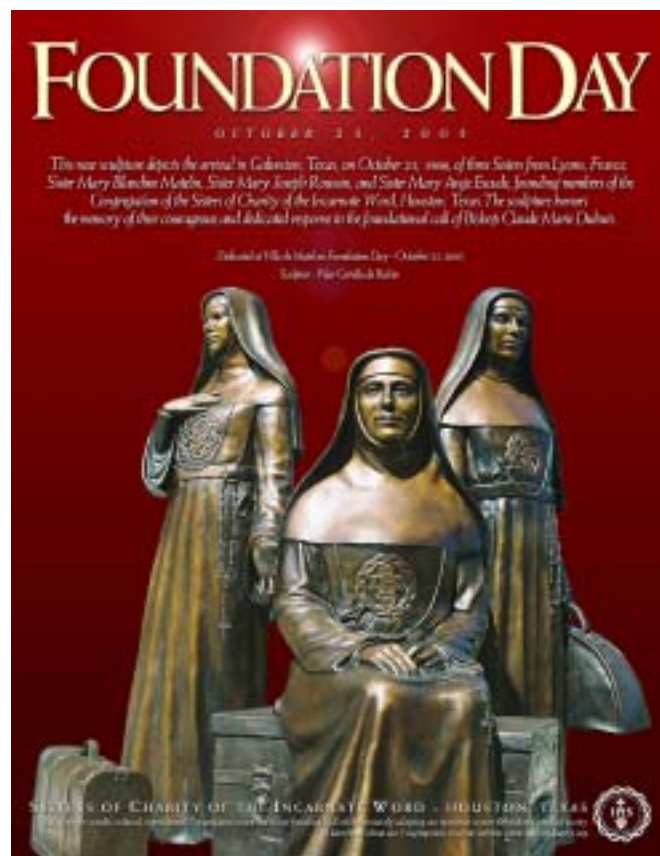
*Sr. Geri Everler*

attended the ceremony along with leadership members from our Congregation, the San Antonio CCVIs, and the Sisters of Divine Providence. Sisters Olive Bordelon, Jean Ann Slater, C.D.P., and Francoise Cluzel, Superior Generals of their Congregations, expressed gratitude to Sister Geri Eveler, C.C.V.I., who planned the event.

The commemorative plaque was the brain child of Sister Geri Eveler. Pati Semander, graphic artist, designed and painted the plaque.



*Sr. Olive Bordelon receives a replica of the plaque and flowers on behalf of the Congregation.*



## FOUNDATION POSTERS COMING SOON

Posters highlighting the new sculpture of the arrival of our first three Sisters have been produced by CCVI Communications. Copies were sent to Sister Communities, health care system leadership and to parishes in communities where the Congregation has ministries. Produced in both Spanish and English, the second annual Foundation Day poster may be hung in your communities and ministries or may be used as gifts to benefactors and friends. A limited number of posters are available upon request to Linda Macdonald ([lmacdonald@ccvi-vdm.org](mailto:lmacdonald@ccvi-vdm.org)) at Villa de Matel.

## **RUAH EXPANDS MINISTRY INTO LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD**

Ruah Center at Villa de Matel is collaborating with other ministries in the East End of Houston in an effort to be more present to those who speak little or no English and who may not be inclined to visit Ruah at Villa de Matel.

Ruah representatives have met with three parish priests in the East End and heads of several ministries to immigrant populations to determine what the spiritual needs of our neighbors might be. One evening each month one or two from the staff go to Immaculate Conception Parish for Centering Prayer; parishioners from Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish are also invited. In addition, an office and a prayer space have been established at St. Austin Center where people seeking social services. Some of the agencies that we are connecting with are the East End Life Center (located at St. Austin); our own CCVI Literacy program; Movimiento Familiar Cristiano, which trains Hispanic married couples to lead groups of their peers in their walk of faith; and the Community Doula Program, a ministry to young mothers.



## **SPIRIT AND LIFE SERIES**

Our next conference, "*What Does the Lord Require: The Demands of Social Justice for Christians Today*," will be February 3, 2006 with Rev. James Hug, SJ from the Center of Concern in Washington, DC. The conference will take place at the International Conference Center of the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio. Registration forms have been sent to all communities. Deadline for registration is January 27. If you need additional forms or more information, please contact Pat Kerwin at the Villa or via e-mail [pkerwin@ccvi-vdm.org](mailto:pkerwin@ccvi-vdm.org).

## **CCVI SISTERS IN CHRISTUS HEALTHCARE**

February 24  
Houston

## **CCVI CHAPTER**

April 5-18  
Villa de Matel

## **CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

June 4-7  
Orlando

## **CCVI JUBILEE**

June 24  
Villa de Matel

## **NEW LEADERSHIP TAKES OFFICE**

June 25  
Villa de Matel

## **25TH ANNIVERSARY OF CCVI PRESENCE IN AFRICA**

December 9



*"Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
suffering in the persons  
of a multitude of sick  
and infirm of every kind,  
seeks relief at your hands."*

*Bishop Claude M. Dubuis*

*Diocese of Galveston*

*1866*