Pause and Listen

Where is your favorite place to sit quietly and enjoy the sights and sounds of God’s creation? Where is your favorite gathering place to join with others to watch the delights of nature unfold?

Just stop by Catherine’s Cottage and step into “Paradise Revisited.” Comfortable furniture is positioned just right inside the solarium to allow residents of both Catherine Kasper Home and Catherine’s Cottage a close-up view of a multitude of birds: cardinals, hummingbirds, orioles, woodpeckers, finches and many others. During the winter, one can watch the deer cautiously approach the bird feeders and consume their share of the bounty.

Beyond the sliding doors of the solarium one can walk over to the Catherine Kasper Home and take a seat on the newly purchased lawn furniture in order to take in the awesome panorama of Lake Gilbraith or to chat with others who are enjoying the outdoors.

Recently a lovely gathering place for the residents of Catherine’s Memory Unit was created. Newly purchased yard furniture and landscaping provides another spot for residents, staff, families and friends to gather and share in the delights made possible by our donors.

It is because of the generosity of families and friends of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ that we are able to more comfortably relish the sights and sounds and people of God’s creation.

Sister Jolise May, PHJC
What has the power to cross generations, tear down decade-old walls, bring back long-forgotten memories, stir up deep-seated emotions, and allow someone nonverbal and non-ambulatory to sing and dance? Why music, of course! And where better to experience the incredible power of music than right here on our very own campus?

Two Saturdays a month Sister Connie Bach works with five or six music therapy groups at the Catherine Kasper Home and its Catherine’s Memory Unit as well as Catherine’s Cottage, and Maria Center. Averaging fifty participants per week, these groups experience more joy and newly found freedom than one can shake their rhythm sticks or tambourine at!

Whether through memory recall, instrument playing, sensory activities, songwriting, lyric analysis, group sharing, storytelling, movement and dance, or with plain old interactive musical activities, participants fill their bellies with laughter and their eyes with rays of sunshine as they find new ways to experience life’s joy and excitement all over again. An incredibly powerful vehicle, music enables even the most isolated to find a few moments of reprieve, meaning, and hope in an otherwise chaotic, confusing and sometimes lonely world.

Through music therapy the body can experience healing because of the release of natural pain killers called endorphins. In addition, natural T-killer cells are released which fight off infection and disease and help to build up the immune system. Bodily functions such as circulation, respiration, heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygenation can also be improved. Just as important are the emotional, spiritual and psychological benefits that come to the fore especially when one is experiencing isolation, depression, loneliness, helplessness, frustration or an inability to accept, understand, or grieve all the changes and losses involved in aging.

How did all this become possible? Thanks to a generous donation from Margie and Ron Bissonnette who also believe strongly in the power of music, Sister Connie has been able to offer one hundred music therapy sessions for the 2007 year. All involved are hoping that new funds will become available from grants and donors to help purchase Catherine Kasper Life Center’s own instruments, props and equipment and to be able to offer music therapy for the Sisters and residents for years to come.

And of course touching all these lives would not be possible without the selfless giving of the volunteers who assist with bringing residents to and from sessions, who pass out and collect instruments, and who help keep participants engaged while Sister Connie facilitates the groups and leads activities. Sisters Bertram Boeving, Joan Fisher and Antoinette Volk along with Associates Dorothy Weber and Margaret Weigley, and Maria Center resident, Barbara Borskie, make all the work with these groups possible with their endless energy and dedication! Behind the scenes Chaplain Carolyn Strzyzykowski and the staff at the Catherine Kasper Home provide the foundation on which great things are happening!

Just ask Sister Bernice Buescher who said, “I’ve learned that music is upbeat, that it is relaxing and gives one a more positive outlook on life. I like when we get together because we share stories, laughter and pain - and it brings about healing. I feel better every time I go to music. It keeps me young at heart and lifts my spirits.”

Sister Connie Bach, PHJC
At Long Last…

Progress is a good thing, but sometimes it disrupts the status quo. And so it was when the PHJC Ministry Center made the decision in 2002 to enlarge the parking lot (Lot D) close to the Villa Maria. During that construction, the 11 circuit outdoor labyrinth was unavoidably damaged and could no longer be used. A capital campaign, launched with the assistance of the Development Office, has resulted in significant donations to support the construction of a new labyrinth.

Contractors of Plymouth, Indiana, a design was developed meeting everyone’s approval. On July 18, 2007, Provincial Leadership of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ approved the design. On July 20, 2007, work began with mowing the field and marking off the circle in the grass with white paint. The paths will be a sunny grass seed and the lines will be a cobble stone. It is our hope that work will be completed by the middle of September.

The labyrinth will be a natural extension from the current Prayer Garden. There will be a flagstone path leading from the eastern edge of the Prayer Garden around the labyrinth to the north. The beauty of the space will be revealed when “walkers” enter the labyrinth gazing at the tranquil lake.

Members of the Labyrinth Task Force have met for several months reviewing materials and visiting other labyrinths to collect data and decide what we want to create here at the PHJC Ministry Center. Members of the Task Force include Loretta Peters, Director, and May Crider, Events Coordinator, Lindenwood; Sister Mary Jo Shingler PHJC, Development Office; Sister Mary Baird, PHJC, Naturalist; Susie Black, Director, Ministry Center Services.

After several meetings with Thomas McGee and Jodie Overmyer of Price Nurseries, Inc., Landscape Designers and Contractors of Plymouth, Indiana, the new labyrinth is taking shape. It is our hope that work will be completed by the middle of September.
In Memory of Our Sisters

**Sister Andre Klein, PHJC** passed away on July 6, 2007 at the Catherine Kasper Home, Donaldson, Indiana. She was born Mary Ellen Klein to Andrew and Margaretha Klein on September 8, 1920 in Mishawaka, Indiana. She entered the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ community and professed her first vows on June 25, 1942.

Sister Andre taught for 23 years at a variety of schools which include: St. Henry and St. Augustine, Chicago; St. Mary, East Chicago, Indiana and St. John, Quincy, Illinois. She then changed ministry and for another 24 years served in various positions at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Gary, Indiana; St. Elizabeth Hospital, Chicago; St. Joseph Hospital, Mishawaka, Indiana and Loretto Hospital, New Ulm, Minnesota.

Sister Andre retired to the Catherine Kasper Home in 1990. May she rest in peace!

**Sister Celeste Sass, PHJC** passed away on June 28, 2007 at the Catherine Kasper Home, Donaldson, Indiana. She was born Mildred Sass to Edward and Walburga Sass on May 13, 1920 in Quincy, Illinois and was the seventh of nine children. She entered the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ community and professed her first vows on June 25, 1944.

Sister Celeste cared for people throughout her life. She ministered in childcare at Angel Guardian Orphanage, Chicago; St. Vincent Villa, Fort Wayne, Indiana; and St. John’s, Belleville, Illinois. She also ministered in elderly care, parish ministry, food service and as a housekeeper, seamstress and receptionist in various places.

Sister Celeste retired to the Catherine Kasper Home in 1994. May she rest in peace!

**Sister Louise Marie Boeing, PHJC** passed away on July 25, 2007 at the Catherine Kasper Home, Donaldson, Indiana. She was born to Bernard and Anna Boeing on April 10, 1909 in Aviston, Illinois. She entered the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ community and professed her first vows on June 26, 1930.

For 40 years Sister Louise Marie ministered to children as a teacher at St. Bavo, Mishawaka, Indiana; and in Illinois schools including: St. Augustine, Chicago; St. Anthony, Beckemeyer; St. John, Quincy; St. Boniface, Germantown and as a child care provider at Angel Guardian Orphanage, Chicago and St. John Orphanage, Belleville, Illinois.

Sister Louise Marie retired to the Catherine Kasper Home in 1985. May she rest in peace!
In August 2006, two Mexican women made their first profession of vows. These two, Sisters Amalia Conde and Silveria Rodriguez have been busy with their ministries and studies. Sister Amalia serves as a teacher for children with special needs in the Catherine Kasper Education Center in Coatzacoalcos in the state of Veracruz. This summer she is focusing her energy on learning English. Sister Silveria divides her time between studying and working at the overnight shelter connected to the hospital in Coatzacoalcos, where she attends to the needs of those who come to be with a loved one who is hospitalized. Many come from the rural area and appreciate the help in getting around the city and the hospital. Sister Silveria also studies for the entrance exams to two universities, both of which have very limited access for the overwhelming number of applicants in the area of medicine. She too will give attention to improving her English as she awaits a second opportunity to take the entrance exams.

But in the middle of all this the two of them met one weekend with Sister Deborah Davis, the director of the program for those in temporary profession. The purpose of the gathering included spiritual growth, community life, relaxation and in general a change of pace. They also visited the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Mexico City.

Sister Yolanda Bautista joined them for most of the weekend, though she had quite a lot of homework for her studies in preparation to become the novice director.

Sister Deborah gave the three of them a mini-workshop on journaling techniques and offered them ample time to put some of these techniques into practice. Each of the “junioras” (the Mexican term for temporary professed members) also met with Sister Deborah individually to share their progress / self-evaluation on their personal goals. But since pictures say much more than the written word, here are some images from the weekend. Please continue your prayers for vocations, especially for those who desire to follow in Catherine Kasper’s footsteps.

*Sister Deborah Davis, PHJC*
General Leadership Team Installation

"The bowl of our life shall be held out each morning to receive, to carry and to return." Dag Hammarskjold

This was the theme for the installation of the new General Leadership Team: Sister Jolise May, General Superior and Councilors, Sister Christiane Humpert, Sister Gonzalo Vakasseril and Sister Flora Vedamutha. On July 28, 2007, Sister Margaret Anne Henss, Loretta Kania, Patricia Szalay, Sisters from Germany, and guests gathered in the Chapel of Kloster Maria Hilf in Dernbach for a simple prayer service.

As they sang the opening hymn, representatives from the new and the outgoing leadership carried in an empty bowl, an Aarati (a plate with flowers, a lamp and incense), a bible and the PHJC Constitution and placed them on the altar. In her opening remarks, Sister Christiane explained the symbol of the bowl. “We applied the symbol of a bowl to this day of assumption of the new office. At the end of her time in office, Sister Hermana gives back to God the bowl she received six years ago, filled with the gifts which she received from God and which she used in honor of God, for the benevolence of her fellow sisters and for the people entrusted to us. Now Sister Jolise, the newly elected General Superior, receives this bowl from God. It is filled with the promise of his Spirit and with his helpful nearness and constancy and with her preparedness to serve our community.” Sister Christiane thanked Sister Hermana for all she has done for the PHJC congregation these past six years. “It is a day of gratification that he sent his Spirit down on one of our sisters to be with her when leading our congregation into the future.”

The prayers, scripture readings and a letter from Mother Mary Catherine Kasper were read in German and English. The readings and prayers called them to be open to being filled, to remember that God gives them what they need and that there is nothing to worry about when walking with God.

From a Taizé prayer they prayed, “Oh Lord, turn me into a bowl for you from which you take things and into which you place things.” From a letter of Mother Mary they heard: “Do not worry unnecessarily. Walk your way with God quietly from one day to the next, and then all will be well.” Finally from scripture was heard, “And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work.”

Following the singing of “We Hold a Treasure,” Sister Hermana called Sister Jolise to come forward. The three elected General Councilors Sisters Christiane, Gonzalo, Flora, and the two appointed sisters, Sisters Julia Dillmann and Gertraud Theis joined Sister Jolise at the altar as Sister Hermana handed over the Constitution and General Directory. Sister Hermana reminded Sister Jolise of her consent to accept General Leadership on May 1, 2007 and now that consent is becoming effective. Addressing the new leadership she said, “You are responsible for the whole congregation, for keeping the spirituality and charism of our foundress Mary Catherine alive and, last but not least, for the Sisters called to live their lives in accordance with the Constitutions and the General Directory.”

In thanksgiving, the Magnificat was prayed through dance, beautifully performed by two Indian Sisters, Sisters Augustina and Josita. The prayer service concluded with intercessions and a blessing. Father Kasper, representing the Bishop of Limburg, gave a short congratulatory to the new General Leadership.

Following the prayer service, several local dignitaries gave gifts to Sister Jolise and Sister Hermana in the courtyard outside chapel. Coffee and cake was served.
for all in attendance while the Sisters and guests greeted the new General Leadership and thanked Sister Hermana for her years of service in General Leadership.

Sister Margaret Anne and Sister Jolise’ two sisters, Pat and Loretta, spent several days before and after the installation in Dernbach. “It was good for us to be there” especially for Pat and Loretta to see where Sister Jolise will be ministering for the next six years.

Worried about their sister being so far from home, they realized that she would be all right and would be supported by her team and all the Sisters of the PHJC Congregation. Sister Jolise reminded them that she is only an e-mail away.

Sister Margaret Anne Henss, PHJC

Special Interest/Development

Ways of Giving

Often when we think of donating to a cause we think only in terms of money. Yet, there are many different ways of giving our time, our talent or our treasure.

Gifts of treasure may include some of the following:

Gifts of Cash
Gifts of cash are usually given by sending a check or a credit card donation to an organization. This may be done in response to a direct appeal, through a form on a website, or at a special collection in church.

Memorial and Tribute Gifts
Tributes offer the opportunity to honor someone special on a special occasion such as a birthday, a get-well message, or an anniversary wish. Memorials express sympathy at the time of death of someone. A donation is given in the name of the honoree, who receives a card informing them of the gift.

Planned or Deferred Gifts
These gifts are usually made in the context of estate planning. They may include a bequest, trust, insurance policy, retirement plan, or gift annuity.

Gifts of Stocks or Bonds
Stocks or bonds may be donated to one’s favorite charity. Tax deduction and avoidance of capital gains tax are available to the donor.

Gifts of Time or Talent
A valuable gift is the gift of volunteers. Generous people give of their time and talent in service to an organization or ministry. The gift of time or talent can be as creative as the person who gives it.

In-kind Gifts
In-kind gifts are items that can be used in a ministry. These may include food or household items for a food pantry, clothing for a clothes closet, baby products or personal products for a needy family, or a prize donation for a special fund-raiser.

If you are interested or have any questions about how you can gift the Poor Handmaid ministries with your time, talent, or treasure please contact the PHJC Development Office.
PHJC Community Week 2007

During Community Week, held June 15-19, 2007, the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, Associates and Fiat Spiritus Community members, gathered together in Donaldson, Indiana. During this time they reconnected with one another, participated in informative sessions, celebrated anniversaries and prayed together.

This year’s Community Week theme, “Diverse Cultures . . . Diverse Expressions. . . One Spirit” symbolized the different cultures of the international congregation of the Poor Handmaids and also celebrated the Spiritual Family of Catherine Kasper.

For more than 25 years the community has gathered to re-energize during this special time, as these photos show.

Julie Dowd, Communications Director
The Associate Gathering VIII was held on Saturday, June 16, as part of the PHJC Community Week. During the liturgy of the day, several Associates were recognized for their special anniversaries. Congratulations to these Associates, and may they be blessed with many more years to come as Associates in the Spiritual Family of Catherine Kasper.

**Five Years**
- Anna Worth
- Becky Collins
- Jeanne Boomershine
- Pauline Pierson

**Fifteen Years**
- Gayle Fiwek
- Mary Paquin
- Not pictured: Rosalyn Koenemann, Patti Paschke, Barbara Walter, LaGarda Holtgrave, Marion Lowry, and Mary Cuney

**Twenty Years**
- Loretta Kania
- Clarence and Bea Simshauser
- Not pictured: Agatha DeBrock, Joe & Dolores Karnia, and Donna Koderhandt

**Ten Years**
- Evelyn Siegel
- Christina Weigler
- Not Pictured: Marla Keefer
Pathways to Citizenship/Immigration Reform

If you are having a hard time understanding the hot and sometimes hostile situations that are seen on TV such as the Minutemen defending our borders; the need for a wall to be built to protect our borders against illegal immigration; the many challenges and dangers and the actual number of men and women who die trying to make it through the natural and man-made traps in their struggle to reach the American Dream, then read on…

First of all you need to understand that if you want to immigrate legally into this country, and you have a relative or employer who can sponsor you, it may take longer than 12 years to get through under the current immigration laws. It may take longer or be almost impossible if you have neither.

Contrast that to living in a situation of poverty in which you are either under-educated or over-educated (there are many professional physicians, architects, lawyers, etc. unable to find a job in Mexico.) You know of people or have heard of many who have made it across the border and who have found work in the USA. Even if the jobs are demeaning and low paying, some immigrants are able to send dollars home to help feed, clothe, educate and provide much needed medical care to their loved ones back in Mexico.

The situation you are in is so desperate that you are willing to risk your life and already poor financial state by paying hundreds or thousands of dollars to a pollero or smuggler to get you across the border. Not many immigrant stories are told by our media but you may remember just a few years ago how one such smuggler abandoned a trailer full of people and how the people inside died of dehydration and suffocation because they were left locked inside the truck.

We hope and pray that this article causes some discomfort, possibly irritates you, and above all calls you to want to look deeper into the major concerns of immigration legislation.

Here are some facts and a story that we believe will open your eyes, touch your heart and encourage you to take action by contacting your Congress person about these concerns or bills pending action in Congress.

Facts:

- The Immigration Reform bill S 1639 was taken off the floor as reported by the Networks. This defeats all hope of passing major immigration legislation for this year.
- The Dream Act amendment H.R. 1585, the department of Defense authorization bill. This being sponsored by Senators Durbin, Hagel and Lugar.
- AG-JOBS Senate Bill 3409/H.R. bill 371 is a compromise bill between growers and farm workers endorsed by more than 400 farm workers groups, employer associations and religious bodies nationwide.

Story:

The Valdez family was originally from a small village in Michoucan, Mexico. In the late 1980s there was much violence and shooting in this town and the family lived in constant fear.

In 1989 the father sent his wife and 4 year old daughter and infant son to live with his relatives in Veracruz, Mexico when he crossed over to the USA. The mother was living with 30 other people in a house and was treated like a servant. She had to clean and cook for the household, yet she and her children were given only leftovers to eat.

The family was reunited in 1991 in Chicago. Sara was six years old. At the first school she attended the teacher wouldn’t teach her English and told her that if she couldn’t speak English she should stand in the corner.

After 6 months, she was transferred to Seward School where she received special help to learn English. She since has graduated from St. Ignatius High School and De Paul University and will begin studies towards a Masters Degree in Psychology at Loyola University.
Through her high school and college years she volunteered as a minister in Church, CCD and at the food pantry. Being undocumented left few avenues for financial aid, but hard work and determination helped her find scholarships and jobs to pay for her education. Sara married a U.S. citizen and through him has temporary residency. The couple is very active in Church and in community service organizations and is a real blessing to everyone.

The father began working at entry level restaurant jobs as a dishwasher and bus boy. Over the years he studied and in the late 1990s earned his G.E.D. and obtained a work permit. He pays taxes and continues to work hard.

In the year 2000 the family was able to buy their own home and now struggles to pay the mortgage. In 2002 Oscar was born. He is a U.S. citizen and a delight to all who know him.

Their other son, Alex, has just completed high school and will attend college in the fall as an Evans Scholar.

Both Mom and Dad work to support the family. Dad continues to do restaurant work and the Mom makes tortillas at a busy neighborhood restaurant.

In Memory of Associate Margaret Hahn

East Three Associate Margaret (Margie) Hahn passed away August 3, 2007. She was 54 years old.

Margie is survived by her sister, Sister Nora Hahn, PHJC, and her brother, Robert Hahn and her sister-in-law, Clare. She is also survived by three nieces, one nephew, and four great-nieces/nephews.

Margie became an Associate in 1995 while she lived in Chicago. Margie was recognized in 2005 for her tenth year as an Associate. In recent years, she was a resident of Maria Center. While living in Donaldson, she was employed by the Ministry Center/CKLC as a receptionist.

Margie’s Mass of Christian Burial was held on August 6 at Catherine Kasper Home Chapel. She is laid to rest at St. Mary’s Cemetery in Evergreen Park, Illinois. May our beloved Margie rest in peace.

Action to be taken:

• Call your Senators and Representatives today. Ask them to sign on to AGJOBS, S3409 & H.R. 371. Capitol Switchboard is 202-224-3121.

• Contact your Senators at the above telephone number and go to www.justiceforimmigrants.org/action.html for a list of talking points or send a letter through interactive section of the website.

• Keep all the persons who are struggling with this challenge in prayer.

Making a Donation is Easy!

You have the option of using your VISA or MasterCard to make your donations. For some of our donors, this is a more convenient way to give.

By using a credit card, you can eliminate the need for check-writing each donation. To assure accuracy, you will receive a receipt from the credit card company and a receipt from the PHJC Development Office.

Thank you for supporting our ministries.

This article has come to life through the first hand knowledge and assistance of Maria Mendez and Sisters Georgine Schleper, Joellen Tumas and Kathleen Quinn.
Ancilla College and the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ bid farewell to Sister Margaret Anne Henss, as Treasurer of the Poor Handmaids and a member of Ancilla College’s first graduating class, the Class of 1967.

Held in the Cenacle Dining Room of the Ministry Center, colleagues from the PHJC Ministry Center gathered to honor her after 13 years of service – ten of them spent as Treasurer and three spent training for the role.

Sister Margaret Anne’s roots in campus education extend back to when the campus was home to Ancilla Domini High School, where she served as a math teacher. She spent three years in that role, before moving to St. Augustine High School in Chicago, where she taught for nine years. A 14-year stint at Mater Dei High School in Breese, Illinois, followed. During that time, Sister Margaret Anne – the oldest of 13 children – had the opportunity to teach her two youngest sisters.

In September, Sister Margaret Anne will enter a sabbatical program designed for women over 60 years of age.

In regard to her ministry as the treasurer, Sister Margaret Anne stated, “I’m most proud that I was able to help co-workers and Sisters understand stewardship and that there is a ministry piece to finances,” she said. “It isn’t all business.”

Fred Arand replaced Sister Margaret Anne as treasurer of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ as of July 1, 2007. Fred has worked with the Poor Handmaids at Ancilla Systems, Inc. since 1994 as Vice President, Financial Services. He will continue his role at ASI and share his time between Donaldson and Hobart, Indiana.

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James Drzewiecki, Men’s Sports Information Director, Ancilla College
This & That

Sister Jolise Begins General Leadership Ministry — Sister Jolise May began a six-year term of ministry in Dernbach, Germany, as Superior General on July 28. Many people gathered in Donaldson on Sunday afternoon, July 22 for an open house in Cana Hall and a Blessing Prayer Service in Ancilla Domini Chapel.

Sisters, Associates, Fiat Spiritus community members, Maria Center residents, Ministry Center co-workers and friends attended a reception from 2:30 – 4:00 to wish Sister Jolise well and to visit, while enjoying a variety of fresh fruits, small desserts, punch and coffee.

The Blessing Prayer Service at 4:00 in the Ancilla Domini Chapel included an entrance procession, an opening prayer, readings from a letter of Catherine Kasper and the Gospel of Mark, as well as the PHJC International Mission Statement.

In a blessing prayer led by Sister Nora Hahn, American Provincial, all present extended their hands over Sister Jolise and prayed, “Bless Sister Jolise with a listening Spirit that she may know you Lord in each person and each day of her service. Bless her with abundant wisdom and courage that together with the General Leadership team she may respond to your Spirit’s stirrings in our community and world.”

Sojourner Truth House Walk-A-Thon — Saturday, June 2, 2007, marked the 8th Annual Walk-A-Thon to benefit Sojourner Truth House. A dedicated group of volunteers, program staff, and clients were joined by an outstanding crowd of more than 160 walkers at Gleason Park Golf Course, Gary, Indiana. Individuals and teams alike enthusiastically participated in the annual fundraising festivities. The proceeds help to provide counseling services, daily meals, a food pantry and clothes closet, housing placements, and medical and dental services to almost 11,000 clients annually. Thanks to all who made this a success.

Dr. Joanna Blount was recently hired as the first permanent Dean of Academic and Student Services at Ancilla College under second-year president Dr. Ron May.

Dr. Blount worked the past 11 years at Southwestern Oregon Community College in Coos Bay, OR, where she worked in several capacities, with her most recent title as Assistant to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. Blount, who has a Doctorate in Community College Leadership from Oregon State University, has spent the past 23 years in higher education.

The Family of Catherine welcomes Dr. Blount.

On August 19 approximately 100 people attended the 15th anniversary celebration of Bethany Retreat House at St. Maria Goretti church hall in Dyer, Indiana.

Sister Dianne Bergant, CSA, an Old Testament scholar at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, spoke on covenant and God’s desire to be in relationship with us. Sister Dianne explained that when she and other professors from CTU take study groups to the Holy Land, they stay at two different religious houses in Bethany. The infamous wall that is being built between Israel and Palestine is being built between those two houses. She challenged those who come to Bethany Retreat House to commit themselves to be people of reconciliation, which the city of Bethany in the Holy Land so sorely needs today.

Guests came into a festive spirit of refreshments and fellowship and were invited to choose a nametag that showed their connection to Bethany Retreat House— as one who made a retreat, was part of the dream group, who volunteered, or who bought books. The nametags were conversation starters, and some people wore icons indicating six or so different ways that they are part of Bethany’s story of 15 years. Congratulations to Sister Joyce Diltz, PHJC, Director and Bethany Retreat House!
Earthworks raises young leaders

Nurturing leadership is a goal of every educator. It is one of those hopes that is rarely gratified in anything like an instant, but instead, takes years and many false starts to be realized. When asked how Earthworks might be fostering the growth of leadership in young people, it seemed most appropriate to ask one of the young summer staff to reflect on the experience of working at Earthworks. The following was written by Joe Quintana, who has worked several summers in the Earthworks programs.

Five years ago I came to Earthworks fresh out of high school. I had the ambition of a high school graduate and had recently decided that I wanted to become an educator. I really do not believe that I could have picked a better place to jump-start my life choice as an educator.

Although I was very young I believed that I was more than ready to take on the role of a counselor at the Earthworks Kids’ summer program and the Goodwill Program (the camp set up to work with young adults with special needs). I was, however, very quickly put into a state of shock. I was never before tested like I was by these two very diverse groups. I lacked the ability to understand the little quirks of getting the kids to listen and discovered that they knew how to play on my inexperience.

I, of course, wanted to be the cool older kid and their friend. I quickly learned the negative consequences of trying to be their friend and became a lot better at being a counselor. It was, however, by living through these experiences that I learned what it takes to be a great counselor to the kids.

The time that I realized that I was getting the role of educator down was when I caught myself asking the children questions that provoked them to think about the reasons they were doing certain things and what the outcomes of their actions might be. I saw in myself the developing ability to get children to think inquisitively.

As a first year counselor, I dreaded the thought of dealing with a question that I might not know the answer to. But I have since learned to embrace the children’s questions and have the confidence to tell them that I do not know the answer, but can find out for them. I can now also encourage the asking of questions that force the group or me to think.

Earthworks has helped me develop into an educator and a leader who strives to get the most out of those that I work with and for.

The environment at Earthworks seems to change all who come into contact with it - from new staff to the children who participate in the camps.

For example, this year I was the only returning staff member in the children’s summer program. The thought of working with new staff was a little scary. I knew that the younger staff would be looking to me for answers to their many questions.

However the transition of the new staff was amazing, and because I was more experienced, I
was able to watch the rapid growth of all the staff members and support them along the way as we learned our new roles together.

In the beginning of the summer one of the girls was very unsure of herself and questioned her ability to convey the content of the lessons to the children. Then as we were in the thick of the summer programs it was like a switch was flipped and this confident young woman was revealed. She was able to work easily with the children, and began to be sure that they were learning as well as enjoying themselves. They paid attention throughout the lesson. To see the confidence that this girl had gained was amazing, and I feel that it was through Earthworks that she was able to learn a life skill, one that will allow her to take on new tasks with confidence.

Earthworks fosters the ability for one to grow and learn some very powerful life skills that will make the individual – child or staff - much stronger. I know that it is because of my experiences at Earthworks that I have become the man that I am today. I am not the same naive young person I was when I came in its doors for the first time. Because of my work here at Earthworks I have become a better person and a good educator. I look forward to offering all that I have learned to children in my own classroom.

Joe Quintana, Earthworks Staff
“Gloria” Concert

“Gloria” by Antonio Vivaldi, (1678-1742) is one of history’s greatest and most popular choral works for soloists, choir and orchestra. It will be presented at 7:00 p.m., October 21, 2007 in the Ancilla Domini Chapel, Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ Ministry Center, Donaldson, Indiana. The choir will be directed by Doctor David Lamb.

Doctor Lamb holds the Doctor of Music degree from Indiana University School of Music, with emphasis in organ performance and vocal performance. Doctor Lamb will present a half hour organ recital prior to the choral work. The choir will consist of members of the surrounding community and will be accompanied by a professional orchestra consisting of members from the South Bend Symphony.

This will be a first time presentation of this choral work in this area, and will be a cultural and enriching experience for all who attend.

Mary Lou McCarthy, PHJC Liturgist and Organist