Lindenwood Labyrinth Completed

We are happy to report our 11-circuit outdoor Labyrinth on the PHJC Ministry Center campus is complete! We are pleased we can now offer you the opportunity to walk our 7-circuit indoor labyrinth in Villa Maria or the newly constructed 11-circuit outdoor labyrinth located to the east of Villa Maria and the Prayer Garden.

It was exciting to watch the area progress from tall grassy surroundings to a beautifully laid out and landscaped meditative space. You will be able to enjoy the beauty of the flowers as you enter the labyrinth from the Prayer Garden and the natural grasses along the lake shore. The walking path is a grassy area where you could take your shoes off to feel the grass and earth beneath your feet as you walk. Once you have entered the center, you will be able to rest on the bench and reflect before starting your journey out. You will be able to hear the birds singing, the soothing sound of the lake, and the hum of farm equipment in the distance — or hear nothing at all but your inner peace. Next spring there will be herb plantings for a natural fragrance. The addition of two benches at the entrance and a lovely wind spinner will provide the finishing touches.

The newly constructed labyrinth in the back of Villa Maria

We wish to thank all who have made this dream a reality. You offered ideas, prayers, encouragement, and monetary donations to bring back the outdoor labyrinth and we cannot say how grateful we are.

Our April 14, 2008 the Quiet Day of Reflection will concentrate on the labyrinth. Whether you are a beginning or novice labyrinth walker, our presenter will focus on the history of the labyrinth and why you might choose to walk the labyrinth. Finally, you will be encouraged to walk the sacred path.

We invite you to come and experience a walk — it was worth the wait!

We also wish to invite you to our Lunch at the Labyrinth/Open House on Sunday, May 4, 2008 from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. There will be a ribbon cutting, prayer, food, and fellowship. We would ask that you RSVP of your intention to join us by calling the Lindenwood offices at 574-935-1780 before April 21, 2008.

Ruth Van Vactor, Program and Marketing Coordinator of Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center

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Reflections Upon Leadership and Clay

“Lord, you are the potter and I am the clay.”

Maria Center is being re-molded in many ways these days. The heating, ventilation and cooling project is re-shaping our appreciation for the spacious living arrangements here, when our independent residents moved into smaller quarters. This move within the building has been made possible through the gracious hospitality of the Sisters who have welcomed Maria Center residents to their living areas. Sharing common rooms and kitchens molds folks into a new awareness of our interdependence. This is especially evident as the closer quarters call for tolerance of changing faces and habits as well as looking out for one another.

As I consider the recent changes brought upon our residents, I marvel at a flexibility many of us underestimated. Of course the moving is disruptive for seniors—for anyone of any age. Yet, in the face of exhaustion and inconvenience, many love their smaller, but simpler temporary rooms. I’ve heard several proclaim with surprise, “The room is so nice and cozy.” and, “That room was like heaven with all that sun for my plants!” Many actually like and have made the best of their rooms. Perhaps the change of scenery has opened up new conversations and self-discoveries for residents as they are adapting even better than they had anticipated.

Just in case you’ve been wondering about some of the “re-shaping” taking place during the HVAC project construction, here are a few specifics:

- So far, 11 residents were moved into temporary rooms for approximately 2-2 ½ months, then moved back into their apartments with new geothermal heating and cooling.
- 7 residents are presently moved to temporary rooms in the Sisters’ living areas and Maria Center. They naturally look forward to the day they may return to their completed apartments.
- 4 residents are still awaiting their time to move.
- 3 residents have chosen to stay with family during construction.
- Preparation for construction involved packing away fragile items, covering lamp shades, storing small items and papers in drawers, closets, and lockers, and choosing what furniture would be moved to temporary rooms. Residents have been doing these things themselves, while a few did even more!

As Maria Center residents face the ways in which their living space has been “re-molded,” I am inspired to reflect upon the challenges the process has also placed before me. I am serving Maria Center residents as temporary Director during Sister Shirley’s illness. Therefore, in the midst of construction changes, residents are adapting not only to longer walks and new living arrangements, but they are dealing with a “differently shaped clay pot” for a different director as well. It is impossible to fill Sister Shirley’s shoes as she entrusts her leadership responsibilities to me. She is a highly effective and experienced director with deep spiritual roots. Yet, I am being re-molded in new and growing ways as she patiently mentors me and co-workers work shoulder-to-shoulder with me. They teach me how things work. Sisters help me whenever possible, and I can feel the power of their prayers lifted up on behalf of our residents and myself.

At first, I began as the simpler clay figure of the activities coordinator that I previously was. Soon, I found myself being re-shaped into a problem-solver, hostess, moving coordinator, communicator, and supervisor as well. Some skills that I had used in previous ministry positions again became useful. Indeed they were sharpened once the rusty skills were again uncovered and adapted to new situations. Through the challenges of serving Maria Center, I become even more grateful for this opportunity. Being re-molded into a better leader is not always easy, but as long as God’s hands are in the work, it is indeed good.

Cindy Garver, Activities Director, Maria Center
Ancilla College Holds Annual United Way Pledge Drive

When late September rolls around, it isn’t unusual to see Ancilla College’s John Gough and Sharon Blubaugh dressed up in some sort of costume.

No, they aren’t getting a head start on Halloween. It’s their way of raising interest and money for United Way.

The two certainly don’t hold back when it comes time to make it enjoyable. One highlight of the pledge drive was the Radio Flyer race, which pits two-man teams of faculty, staff, and students against each other as partners take turns pulling each other using a wagon.

Another tradition is John Gough’s “Swim in Lake Gilbraith,” where this year he jumped in the neighboring lake and pulled a boat containing Dr. Joanna Blount, Vice President of Academics and Student Affairs, over 50 meters back to shore.

“It’s important to get students involved in the community,” said Sharon Blubaugh, Ancilla College Registrar. “United Way is an organization that helps everyone in the community. We do this to create student participation and awareness of United Way, and we hope this will continue to be an annual event.”

“Annually, it is part of the mission of Ancilla College to provide hope and services to the underserved,” said John Gough, who serves as chair of the Business Department. “We feel contributing to the United Way helps us accomplish that mission and bring notoriety to the needs of our area agencies and constituents that need their help. In keeping with the tradition at Ancilla, we like to involve faculty, students, and staff in raising funds while having an enjoyable time.”

Ancilla College Holds Annual United Way Pledge Drive

Through Word Gathering we attempt to keep the reader aware of the PHJC mission by providing factual and timely information, sharing experiences and happenings, creating awareness and participation, challenging others to take action on issues and communicating the image of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.

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Word Gathering is published quarterly by the American Province of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ of Donaldson, Indiana for Sisters of the Province, Associates, members of the Fiat Spiritus Community and friends. Contents of Word Gathering are not official, nor do they necessarily reflect the views of PHJC Provincial Leadership.

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James Drzewiecki, Men’s Sports Information Director, Ancilla College
The PHJC Raffle is not just a local event. Although most of the winners come from the Midwest—Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio — some of the prizes were sent to lucky winners as far away as Washington, Texas and California.

This year the winners were:

**Shades of Blue Tulips Quilt**
Sister Joetta Huelsmann

**Blue flowered Quilt**
Emma Niebrugge

**Patchwork Quilt**
Patti Copeland

**Green and Purple Quilt**
James Kirchhoff

**Ring Design Quilt**
Joanne Sellis

**Blue Floral Quilt**
John Mulesa, Jr.

**Snowman Design Pillow**
St. Vincent, Elkhart/Pastor

**Red, White and Blue Afghan**
Dee Karnia

**Beige, Purple and Green Afghan**
Edith R. Fister

**Large Granny Squares Afghan**
Marie L. Jacobs

**Ripple Design Afghan**
William Brandenburg

**Blue, Rose and White Afghan**
Dorothy Gemmer

**Beige and Brown Afghan**
Catherine Forrest

**Cream Color Afghan**
Wayne Byrd

**Hockey Game Table**
David and Marilyn Athmer

**Picnic Basket**
Jim and Helen Clarke

**Magazine Rack, hand crafted**
Joe Kirchhoff

**Bed in a Bag, Queen Size**
David Arana

**Patio Pit**
Sandy Kinder

**Large Weber Grill**
Mary Lauer

**Shop Vac**
Tom Keller

**Spring Wreath**
John Tumas

**Large Christmas Wreath**
Janet Petrites

**Waterford Crystal Picture Frame**
Buck and Julianne Toenges

**Red Forcaster Pilot Case**
Florence J. Koeber

**Anthony Acres Weekend**
Mary Lunde

**Gibson 7 piece Cookware Set**
Ewald Holzinger

**Water Color Painting**
George and Ruth Rehaueme

**27 inch TV, VCR and DVD**
Patrick Morrissey

**Handcrafted Black Bear**
Tegan Ann Morrissey

**Norelco 12 cup Coffee Maker and Mugs**
Edward Antos

**Kitchen Kettle Multi Cooker and Steamer**
Dennis Morrissey

**Rod and Reel**
Marlene Nieding

**George Foreman Grill and Knives**
Carol A. Puls

**Electric Skillet**
T. Petrites

**Flat Ware**
Glenda Warner

**Set of Pots and Pans**
Gerald Wesselmann

**Pressure Cooker/Canner**
G. Mestrich

**Golf Putting System and Cooler**
Judith Markle

**Nutcracker and $25 to buy nuts**
Bobbie Anderson

**Afghan Harp and Afghan**
Patricia Szalay

**Breakfast 101 and Tea Kettle**
R. A. Snyder

**Southwest Party Package**
Johanna Spracklen

**$50 Cash**
Toomey and McCarthy

**Razor Scooter**
Jim Byrne

**$50 Cash**
Margaret Quinn

**Lighted World Globe**
Steve Elser

**Weber “Smokey Joe” Grill and Ancilla Beef**
Sandor Ransom

**50/50 WINNERS**

- Jim and Lenora Fischer $7,761
- Steven Sommers $3,881
- Agnes Spencer $2,328
- Rev. James Sauer $1,552
Nazareth Home Gala Tops Out at $108,000

The 2007 Nazareth Home Gala Chef Tasting and Live and Silent Auction was held in the atrium of the Federal Courthouse in Hammond, Indiana on October 18. This year’s event went over its $100,000 goal, with a final tally of $108,000 raised to benefit Nazareth Home. Over three hundred guests gathered to sample a delicious array of hor’dourves provided by some of the finest local restaurants and caterers, including Chef Nico Luna from Villa De Bruno, Chef Carl Lindskog, Chef Glennard Brooks from the Genesis Convention Center, Chef Terry Zych, Hospitality and Program Chair of Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Chef Jack Mix of Comfort’s Catering, and Chef John Erb and Chef Kevin Thorsen from the Radisson Hotel and Star Plaza.

Amidst the award-winning Chihuli art featured in the courthouse, guests browsed a selection of more than 100 silent auction items and several live auction items, including a Day-at-the-Races package provided by Tom Collins, airfare and a 5-night stay at a Myrtle Beach condo, and a selection of jewelry from the Aaland Diamond Company. Amidst the fierce bidding for the Day-at-the-Races package, Dr. Jeff Meister stepped forward during the auction to offer a second Day-at-the-Races package, which included race driving lessons in his turbo-charged Ferrari. That package was promptly scooped up by the bidder who lost out on the Collins-sponsored Day-at-the-Races!

The smooth jazz sounds of the Billy Foster Trio filled the atrium, while guests sipped on flavored martinis prepared by Michelle Burget, a variety of domestic and imported beers and microbrews, provided by first-time Gala sponsor Calumet Breweries, and varietal wines. Student volunteers from St. John Bosco School, Purdue University Calumet Hospitality and Tourism Program, The Ivy Tech Community College Hospitality/Culinary Arts Program, and Youth of East Chicago served as registration assistants, chef assistants, and helped with clean-up and other tasks throughout the evening.

During a brief program, Dr. Ed Williams from Resorts Casino and Hotel, and Honorary Gala Chair, presented Sister Barbara Kuper with a $10,000 check from the Resorts Casino Midwest Golf Open, sponsored by Resorts in August, to benefit Nazareth Home. In addition to those mentioned, many others contributed to the success of the Gala, including Judy Schlosser and Peggy Guernsey, General Co-Chairs, along with a very dedicated planning committee, generous sponsors, underwriters and supporters, and, of course, the wonderful chefs who provided the delectable food, and their services, free of charge. Nazareth Home, a ministry of the Poor Handmaids, is a licensed foster care home in East Chicago, for medically compromised babies and children.

Renae Brantley, Regional Director of Development Services, Ancilla Systems, Inc.

In Memory of Associate Joseph Karnia

North Region Associate Joe Karnia passed away on September 10, 2007, following an extended illness. Joe is the husband of Associate Dolores Karnia, and brother-in-law of PHJC Sister Katie Bobber. He was 84 years old. Joe is also survived by nine children and twenty-two grandchildren. Two other of his children are deceased.

Joe was a veteran of World War II, having served in the Army Air Corps. He was retired from the United States Postal Service. He also was a former longtime parishioner of St. Augustine Parish in Chicago, and had currently been a member of St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish.

Joe was recently recognized by the Associate Community for his twenty years as an Associate. He and Dolores celebrated their fifty-seventh wedding anniversary this past spring. May Joe rest in peace!
Sojourner Truth House Rolling in New Vans

A few months ago, Sojourner Truth House was literally limping along with a 15-passenger van whose best days had already come…and gone! Sister Peg Spindler, Director of Sojourner Truth House, was trying to come up with an innovative way to make yet-another repair to the “ailing” van. The van provided much-needed transportation for clients. So, we raised a plea for help!

Imagine the excitement of staff, clients, and volunteers alike when Sojourner Truth House was able to purchase not one, not two, but three slightly used vans, thanks to the generosity of donors, some grant-writing success, and the “spare change” that donors and supporters shared with us. Transportation is a critical part of Sojourner’s ministry to women and children in need. Each morning dozens of women and children are picked up from the local shelters; their children are dropped off at schools, toddlers are dropped off at local day care facilities, clients are brought to Sojourner Truth House to access services and provided with transportation to other services in the community, or are given assistance moving into permanent housing…and the list goes on. So you see, the three vans have already filled up a gap in the services that the old van couldn’t fulfill!

Donors who provided assistance with the van purchases include the Dean & Barbara White Family Foundation, the Knight Foundation Donor Advised Fund, and the Tom Sourlis and Sue Eleterio Donor Advised Fund at Legacy Foundation, the Congregation of St. Agnes, and of course, all the “spare change” donors, without whose help, this would not have been possible!

Renae Brantley, Regional Director of Development Services, Ancilla Systems, Inc.

Diocesan Religious Congregations Honored at Prayer Service

Religious sisters, brothers and others filed reverently inside Ancilla Domini Chapel in Donaldson on Sunday, November 4, for a Sesquicentennial Jubilee celebration. Close to 20 religious congregations from around the diocese were represented in the gathering at scenic PHJC Ministry Center, where a special prayer service took place at 2:30 p.m.

The service was offered to honor those men and women dedicated to religious life, who serve or had served the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and is one of the final celebrations marking the Sesquicentennial Jubilee year.

The beautifully ornate chapel with its statuary and stained glass provided an impressive space for the solemnity of the occasion. As the ceremony began, women processed up the aisles joyously ringing hand bells. Individual candles were then lit in recognition of the religious orders serving currently and in the past, on a stunning display laid before the altar, as the name of each congregation was read.

Solemn prayers were chanted by Bishop John M. D’Arcy, who presided over the service, and hymns of praise resounded as members of the many orders lifted their voices as one.
Following recitation of the Sesquicentennial Jubilee Prayer and a reading from Scripture, Bishop D’Arcy spoke of his gratitude to those who had prepared the service saying it was “a moment filled with reverence.”

Religious life is a sacrifice, the bishop said, noting that it takes special faith to live it in these times. “The Eucharist is at the heart of religious vocation. ... Religious life is above all else an act of love. ... We must return to the charism that we all have: prayer.”

The Jubilee would not be complete, said the bishop, without “this day and moment and prayer.” He added, “To take grace from this day we must ponder again our vocations.”

All were invited to a reception in Cana Hall on the lower level where a Powerpoint presentation highlighted the different religious congregations who have and still serve in the diocese. Spirits were high as the groups of religious enjoyed food and fellowship.

Sister Rita Musante, OLVM, has been a Victory Noll sister for 50 years after “falling in love with God” and wanting to share that with the world. She serves in liturgy and spirituality ministry at the Motherhouse in Huntington, and said of the celebration, “It was lovely. The setting and the candles were most beautiful. I love the bells ... they go right to the soul.”

Sister Damian McNamara, PHJC, who has served for 48 years as a Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ, provides transportation for the sisters of the order and agrees the prayer service was meaningful, saying, “It was wonderful that so many sisters were there.”

Ancilla College teacher, Sister Judith Diltz is also a Poor Handmaid of Jesus Christ and felt the service was “rich, to be praying together with men and women in the diocese. It was solemn, prayerful and deep.”

Holy Cross Brother Walter Gluhm, who is entering his 50th year of service, is currently superior at Columba Hall on the University of Notre Dame campus. Of the service, he said smiling, “Well done! The sisters really know how to put it on.”

Holy Cross Brother Roy Smith cheerfully stated that he has served for 41 years and is currently doing development work for the province. Of the jubilee celebration he said, “It moved me. I was awed by all the communities who serve in the diocese. The years of service touch you.”

It was apparent that many were touched as well by the recognition they received during this celebration of consecrated life and were grateful to Barbara Ziliak from the Sisters of the Holy Cross and Sister Connie Bach, PHJC who organized the prayer service.

As Bishop D’Arcy proclaimed, “The consecrated women, priests, brothers and sisters, especially the sisters, have been one of the main reasons why this diocese has flourished. We must never forget them and always learn from them. It is still right and legitimate to give everything to God. They’ve taught us by their lives as well as their words.”

Kay Cozad
Reprinted with permission from Today's Catholic, November 11, 2007.

Merry Christmas
and a Blessed New Year!
“The dear God gives his blessings…Let us go on in gratitude to God, fulfilling our duties towards God, our neighbors, our congregation. Even if we are separated in space, we are closely united in our vocation and in the spirit of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. So we do not feel the separation by the ocean so much.” (Letter 132 of Catherine Kasper, written to the Sisters of the American Province, Dec. 17, 1887)

These words of Catherine Kasper could also be written to the Sisters who are serving in Kenya: Sister Esther Dolezal and Sister Germaine Hustedde from the American Province; Sister Lena, Sister Sushma, Sister Shanti from the Indian Province; and Sister Jacqueline, a Native Kenyan Poor Handmaid.

Because Provincial Leadership supports our Sisters in their places of ministry, Sister Nora and I visited Kenya from September 1 – 11, 2007. While there we had official Visitation with Sisters Germaine and Esther. Sisters Lena and Jacqueline joined us for the faith sharing about “We are a Letter from God.”

That theme of “A Letter from God” really describes my entire visit to Kenya. God revealed so much about his love and greatness in this country and its peoples.

Before I left for this visit, I found Kenya on the map of Africa and read something about it. What I discovered when I got there, however, is that all the reading ahead of time could not compare to the actual experience of being there and sharing the culture of the people.

Sister Germaine and a Kenyan driver from Meru met us at the Nairobi airport when we arrived at 8:45 p.m. on September 2. We had actually left Donaldson at 1 p.m. on September 1, flying from Chicago to Heathrow and then from Heathrow to Nairobi. I even learned a lot on the plane. On the flight from Chicago to London I sat next to a group of Baptists from Texas who were going to help a sister congregation in southern Romania. And on the flight from Heathrow to Nairobi I sat next to a couple from Ottawa who were going to Kenya for a conference helping people with AIDS. The woman was originally from Chicago. Both of these flights were 8 hours in length so you do talk to those sitting next to you.

Because it was after 9 p.m. we stayed overnight in Nairobi at the Mill Hill Missionary Retreat Center and left with our driver and Sister Germaine the next morning to drive to Mitunguu. This is a four-hour ride in a Land Rover. This is about 300 kilometers or about 185 miles over very bumpy roads, filled with many deep potholes. On the way we saw fields of pineapple. We stopped to buy three pineapples and four boxes of juice to enjoy on our way and to quench our thirst. We saw rice fields and tea fields as well.

When we arrived in Mitunguu, Sister Lena, the Indian Poor Handmaid who lives with Sister Germaine and takes care of the girls in the boarding school, had a wonderful dinner prepared for us. For dessert we had “custard apples,” a sweet fruit with large black seeds. They grow right there in the garden.

After dinner we went to the chapel and began our Visitation with prayer and sharing. We prayed again at 6:15 p.m., ate supper and played progressive rummy before having a shower with a cup and crawling under the mosquito net.
The next morning we were up for 6:30 prayer in the convent chapel and walked to the 7:15 Mass with two Kenyan priests and about 15 parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Mission. The pastor is Father Francis Gaciata, a native Kenyan priest. After Communion he called us up to the front to welcome us. On all the following days the children and teachers from St. Francis Primary School were always present to celebrate the Eucharist together. We always felt very welcome and enjoyed the singing, drumming and dancing. Some days the readings were in the Kishwahili language and on other days they were in English. The songs were always in Kishwahili. I quickly learned the word for Lord “Bwana” that was often repeated. Clapping and “in-place” swaying always accompanied the group of dancers for the four processions that took place throughout the Mass – Entrance, Gloria, Offering of the Gifts, and after-Communion.

We spent the first two days with Sister Germaine and Sister Lena. Then on September 5 and 6 we visited Sister Esther at Materi Girls’ School. On Friday and Saturday, September 7 and 8 we were at the formation house in Merutown with the Indian Sisters Sushma, Shanti and Vimala as well as the 11 Kenyan women. By late Saturday afternoon we were back in Mitunguu where Sister Jacqueline joined us for a faith sharing at the end of Visitation. Monday, September 10 Sister Germaine joined the driver and us for a return trip to Nairobi. The final trip lasted 36 hours until we were back in the driveway of the Little House in Donaldson on Tuesday afternoon around 4:30 p.m.

Let me tell you a little about the schools: St. Francis of Assisi School and Materi Girls’ School. St. Francis of Assisi School is a primary school. The classes are called Standards. There are eight Standards and the school is registered and has about 200 students. Some of the students are boarders who live there and come from great distances to attend the school. The classrooms are open with windows across from each other to allow for better breezes to blow through. Each classroom has about 36 students with one teacher. The children attend the 7:30 a.m. Mass. The boarders eat in a dining room, at the end of which is an outdoor kitchen where the meals are prepared.

Materi Girls’ School is a secondary school. The four classes in those schools are called Forms, so freshmen are in Form One; sophomores, Form Two, and so on. This school is part of a compound where almost 1000 people live. It has its own chapel, named St. Ann, in honor of the mother of Brother John who founded Materi Girls’ School. Sister Esther conducted a “Communion of Desire” prayer service the first evening that we stayed at her home. This was necessary because the priests who serve here were on vacation and not enough hosts had been consecrated for the Communion Services. Many of the young women led the singing, lit the candles and prepared everything, including flowers for the evening prayer service. After the First Reading and the Gospel reading, Sister Esther gave a short reflection on the readings.

Another most interesting part of the culture is the food. One typical Kenyan dish that we had was ugali, an African cornmeal mush made from white cornmeal, finely ground, water and salt. This is usually served with meat or vegetable stews. Our vegetable stew included carrots, cow peas, beans, ochre, green peppers, onions, tomato paste and spices such as coriander, cumin, cloves, mustard, salt, ginger and garlic. We ate very nutritious meals while we were in Kenya.

While with Sister Esther I had the chance to visit the Gakirwe Nguuru Water Project that has been in operation since 1987. In this agricultural co-op the people grow hibiscus, chamomile and lemon grass for teas. They also have mango, papaya, pineapple and guava that they use to make jams.

Kenya, continued on page 13
Linden House – A Special Place to Live

Over the last year, I have had the opportunity to work with and become more familiar with the Linden House facilities which are supported by Ancilla Systems. In 1992, the original concept of establishing the Linden House in Chicago, IL was to provide affordable housing for seniors and individuals with special needs.

As you may know, there are four Linden House facilities located in Chicago, Hobart, Gary and Mishawaka. They each have their own personality and unique environment. What you may not know is the incredible impact those facilities have on the lives of the very special residents who reside there.

The site managers and their staff are committed to providing a safe, homey environment for all who live at their facility. The Linden House mission statement says, “…enriching the quality of life for its residents by respecting the dignity of each person and providing a sense of community…”

There are a variety of resources to assist the residents with educational updates on various topics, health and wellness screenings, exercise classes, birthday celebrations and social services to make their lives richer and fuller. The buildings are well maintained and it is truly a small community of folks living independently but under one roof!

Sister Mary Ellen Goeller, Sister Joan Fisher, Sister Teresa Schleper and I recently attended the 10th anniversary celebration at the Gary facility. What a tribute to the Poor Handmaids to watch these folks enjoy a festive luncheon. Most of the food was homemade and was delicious. Everyone was dressed up and in good spirits especially when the entertainment started. It’s that extra special caring and concern that was so evident to me after attending that event. The PHJC Shared Values of respect and community immediately come to mind.

Most of the residents that the Linden House Board members meet with and talk to at the quarterly/annual resident interview are very appreciative of the opportunity to live in such a nice place with such wonderful neighbors. The Linden House staff is really an extension of family and tries to be available when the residents have questions or need assistance. One lady told us she felt very secure and safe and not afraid to live alone. If she was living on her own, she was sure the place would not be kept as clean or taken care of as well.

Many of the residents participate on the resident council and enjoy getting together on a regular basis to plan activities including outings, BINGO and celebrations. There is a genuine spirit of caring for each other. One resident who drives helps others by taking them to the doctor or the store. She said she gets some pretty nice tips, such as a free lunch or other expression of appreciation. She enjoys helping the other residents who don’t drive.

If you are in the neighborhood of one of the Linden House facilities you might stop in and say hello. I think you will be pleasantly surprised and leave with a sense of what this important ministry provides for those who want to live independently.

Tony Mola, Administrator, Ancilla Systems Inc.
Sister Amalia’s Radio Presentation

Not quite as dramatic as Gabriel’s invitation to the young Mary of Nazareth, but late one night came a call and a challenge to Sister Amalia Conde Dominguez. It made her discern and hesitate, but once she accepted the challenge, it left her both changed, wiser and grateful.

That evening two wonderful high-energy women, bursting with love for their new Diocesan Commission on Family apostolate, a one-hour Saturday afternoon radio show, knocked on the convent door seeking the assistance of a religious.

The theme for their next radio program was “Orphan Children of Living Parents.” The subject touched on the social spectrum of children left alone all day as single moms work, children abandoned by one or both parents who seek work in the north or who seek other companions, and children mistreated or ignored at home.

Sister Marilyn Haselhorst helped Sister Amalia prepare her presentation using both Sister Amalia’s earlier experiences as a teacher and her current experience with children in the Catherine Kasper Education Center. Sister Amalia included biblical quotes and Church documents on family life. The nights of preparation with the team ran quite late.

Co-participants were a married couple in charge of a children’s home, a couple active in the Diocesan Commission on Family and two adolescents, a boy and a girl, each victims of the abandonment. Their stories were told.

Until a year ago, 13-year-old Daniel lived with a grandmother. Daniel packed groceries for tips. If he did not bring home enough money, the grandmother would lock him and his younger brother in the bathroom for the night. Finally the boys ran away, sleeping in the bus station and using the tip money for food. Sister Joan Trippel and her social worker in the comedores, Rocio Vasquez, found the boys and took them to the orphanage.

Sandy, 14 years old, was abused at home. As a child, her mother burned Sandy’s hand because she did not know how to start the fire to warm tortillas. A few years later the mother threw her out of the house. She now lives in a children home where she dreams of a traditional 15-year-old’s celebration like those for other girls in her school.

The midnight oils brought great success for those involved in the radio program. For Sister Amalia the challenge to participate in something she never before tried or considered, was an opportunity to show her strengths as both an observant teacher and a caring Handmaid.

A great job, Sister Amalia! Thanks!

_/ Sister Frances Jean Gallinatti, PHJC

In Memory of Sister Verona Reeb, PHJC

Sister Verona Reeb, PHJC passed away on August 13, 2007 at the Catherine Kasper Home, Donaldson, Indiana. She was born Elizabeth Reeb to Valentine and Elizabeth Reeb on August 13, 1916 in Belleville, Illinois. She entered the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ community and professed her first vows on June 25, 1938.

For 54 years, Sister Verona ministered as a nurse/administrator at various hospitals. Nearly half of that time was at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Chicago. She also served at St. Joseph Hospital, Mishawaka and St. Catherine Hospital, East Chicago in Indiana and St. Mary’s Hospital, East St. Louis, Illinois. Sister Verona had fond memories of her semi-retirement position as a Sister Hostess at St. Elizabeth Hospital where she enjoyed working in the outpatient department.

Sister Verona retired to the Catherine Kasper Home in 1995. May she rest in peace!
Earth Charter Conference in Mexico

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society. … It is an expression of hope and a call to help create a global partnership at a critical juncture in history. (Preamble)

In Spanish La Carta de la Tierra translated literally means “A letter from the Earth.” And how appropriate. After we PHJC’s endorsed the Earth Charter during Community Week 2006, I was eager to incorporate some of its principles in the two week El Puente de Esperanza Summer Camp that I directed in the indigenous Otomi community of San Ildefonso Tultepec, Amealco, Querétaro. And so it happened. So receptive were the volunteer teachers and the children in 2006 that the Earth Charter again became the focus of the summer courses and activities in 2007. Environmental education with the objective to build/install attitudes, values and behavior repertory among the children became the essential part of our curriculum. The Earth Charter became the excellent instrument and conductor of our summer activities. “Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.” (The Earth Charter)

Respect for Life . . . Economic and Social Justice . . . Peace . . . Democracy: These four spheres are intimately connected to better the world for the common good of all now and for the future. Let me share with you how some of the Earth Charter principles were put into action with the help of 31 volunteer teachers and the participation of over 150 children and youth.

In the preamble we read “The Earth Charter…seeks to inspire in all peoples … a shared responsibility for the well-being of the human family.” I first met with a group of ten university volunteer students introducing them to the Earth Charter and its guiding principles. I extracted certain principles that would be adaptable on a primary level for children and offered ideas how these principles could be put into action in classes of science, art, ecology, values, Spanish, and drama.

These principles and how they were put into action included:

- Respect and Care for the Earth
  - Murals, nature walks, drama presentations, planting beans and beets, learning parts of flowers.
  - Youth designed and painted large barrels that were distributed throughout the center of town to business and restaurant owners for garbage.
  - A Saturday campaign to collect garbage in four areas for the community by more than 60 children.
  - Distribution of over 60 cedar trees donated by the government office SEMARNAT (Secretary of Natural Environment).

- Democracy/No violence/Peace
  - Games with emphasis on participation and not competition.
  - Exercises in confidence.

From October 10 – 13, Sisters Mary Joan Trippel and Amalia Conde from Coatzacoalcos and Sisters Yolanda Batista, Mary Jane Ranek and Silvera Rodríguez from Querétaro attended a national conference on the Earth Charter in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. In the opening ceremony, an indigenous musical group from Tabasco along with a local grade school drum and bugle corps, opened the conference with their music and civic honors – a blending of traditional and
contemporary harmony. The following are some of our reflections on the many talks we attended.

From Sister Mary Jane – In the opening presentation, Brazilian Oscar Modaduru, the official representative of the Earth Charter for Latin America presented the following image. If the Earth could talk to us what would it say? “I am the conscience of the Earth. I am Gaia! I am your home. I am Life. I am the manifestation of all of creation. I am Mother and Healer. But I am at my limit - too many deaths will result in the death of everyone and everything. Do not let me die. I am Mother Earth.”

For me the most challenging question presented was: How would the world be if each one of us had complete confidence in the other person? We must live in the awareness of the common good. The message of the Earth Charter is that each of us possesses wisdom, we have the right to be happy and to experience unconditional love.

From Sister Yolanda – This conference was very informative and challenging to me. I am called to learn to live a sustainable way of life and thus build a more participatory and just world. I learned that an environmental conscience, values and principles need to guide my daily actions. The Earth Charter is an excellent instrument to know the Earth as our home and is a guide to stimulate our social responsibility to carry out actions to ensure the energetic sustainability of the planet. Our every day life relations should generate the respect for nature and the global vision of sustainability of the ecosystems.

From Sister Amalia – I enjoyed the conference very much. There were some things I already knew and others that surprised me very much. Most impressive were the video interviews of simple Brazilian peasants who live the values of the Earth Charter without knowing it. Here in our Catherine Kasper Education Center in Coatzacoalcos we are recycling and separating garbage as well as teaching the children to take care of and protect plants.

Can you imagine a just, sustainable, peaceful, hopeful everyday environment? That’s the first step of awareness that the Earth Charter challenges us to create. And it begins with me incorporating the Earth Charter’s principles in my daily activities, being a model for others, having confidence in my abilities, and collaborating with others so that both parties win. Hopefully we have planted the seed of possibility for a better world in the children and youth of San Ildefonso.

Sister Mary Jane Ranek. PHJC

(Kenya, continued from page 9) on site and sell. The tea leaves (and only the inner 3 leaves are picked by hand) are dried on flat beds out in the sun and then also packaged in a tannish-colored tissue paper.

In Meru we visited “The House of Katherine,” the formation house for aspirants, postulants and novices, dedicated on March 24, 2006. The excitement of the young people made our stay most lively. I was impressed with the fact that Sister Sushma did her formation course in Nairobi so that she would understand the Kenyan culture and how the charism of Catherine Kasper can be lived there. The Kenyan Sister, Sister Jacqueline is upgrading her nursing in Chogoria and will begin a mobile clinic for people of the area who have little access to health care.

The ministry of the Poor Handmaids and the work of Catherine Kasper continues “one person at a time” bringing Christ to our world and being neighbor to our brothers and sisters in the family of God in Kenya.

Sister Virginia Kampwerth, PHJC, Provincial Councilor
Vivaldi’s “Gloria” a Success at the PHJC Ministry Center – On October 21, 2007 the Ancilla Domini Chapel was packed with an audience for the Vivaldi’s “Gloria.” A 14-member professional symphony orchestra and a 42-voice choir, made up of the Ancilla Domini Choir and other community members, delivered the beautiful “Gloria.” The evening was highlighted with instrumental and vocal solos. Prior to the “Gloria,” conductor Dr. David Lamb played an organ recital, which resonated throughout the chapel. At the post-concert reception held in Cana Hall, guests couldn’t say enough about the wonderful concert and their hope that more similar programs will be held at the PHJC Ministry Center.

Ancilla College has announced the appointment of Todd Zeltwanger as Executive Director of Institutional Advancement, effective October 15. Zeltwanger comes to Ancilla after spending the past six years at Starke Memorial Hospital as the Director of Physician Recruitment and Relations. A graduate of Purdue University, Zeltwanger brings a strong background in marketing and public relations to the College, as well as plenty of experience working with members of Marshall, Starke, and St. Joseph counties. “We’re excited about his joining us,” said Dr. Ron May, President of Ancilla College. “He is excited about the opportunity here – joining Ancilla and the staff here. He will do a great job of building our Institutional Advancement efforts.”

Sister Stephen Brueggeman Fund – Sister Stephen has resigned from the HealthVisions board after serving on the board since the inception of HealthVisions Midwest. Sister Stephen was on the design team and development of this organization. It was through her vision and those who worked with her that this new health ministry of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ was instituted.

In recognition for her great service, the “Sister Stephen Brueggeman Fund” was established. This fund will be dedicated to serving emergency needs of the most needy or short-term program needs not supported elsewhere. Often cribs or baby clothes are needed or money for electric bills. This fund will provide some of these needy items.

Congratulations to Sister Yolanda Bautista, who in July completed the national school for the training of formators in Mexico City. This six month course prepared her for her new ministry, that of director of novices. Please continue to pray for her and for vocations to our congregation.

What do you think of when you hear “thatched roof”? Maybe an African village or an English country cottage? Most people don’t relate Donaldson, Indiana and thatched roofs but the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ have their own thatched-roof cob cottage. Sister Mary Baird from the Moontree Community, and many volunteers over the past two years, have constructed a cob cottage on the PHJC Ministry Center campus, just east of Upas Road and south of the Fiat Spiritus Community house. Cobb, a mixture of sand and straw, was used to build the walls and some of the thatch for the roof was picked locally. Most material for the cottage was found within a 10-mile radius of the building site. When completed, the cob cottage may be used as a hermitage for prayer and meditation.

HealthVisions Midwest, a nonprofit organization supported by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, based in East Chicago, was recently awarded $415,000 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities among minority populations.
HealthVisions Midwest is one of 40 organizations selected from 22 states across the country. The five-year funding will support local efforts to address and overcome the unique causes of health disparities among specific ethnic populations and in key health areas. Locally, the CDC funding will benefit residents throughout Lake County, Indiana and will be used to address infant mortality and morbidity among Hispanic/Latino populations.

During the month of October, Heartland Artists Gallery held its annual Juried Exhibition in Plymouth. Artists from all over Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin entered their art work to be judged and possibly displayed.

Sister Nancy Raboin’s water color painting, “Mother Earth,” was judged very favorably to win a place in the month long exhibition. Congratulations Sister Nancy!

Loretta Peters was received as a novice into the Fiat Spiritus Community on August 26. Brother Bob Overland, FS and Claudia Swarthout, FS represented the Fiat Spiritus Community in the Rite of Incorporation which was attended by representatives from the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ and the Associate Community. Please keep Loretta and Novice Rosalie Durante in your prayer as they prepare for vows.

Sojourner Truth House

When I walked through the doors of Sojourner Truth House, I was broken down and hopeless. Today, I am full of hope and love for myself. With the help of STH staff and the group activities, I have acquired new skills to continue on this wonderful journey called life!

You see, I am a 27-year-old crack addict. I have been struggling with addiction since the age of 13. I was raised in the Catholic Church and I was instilled with good values. At the age of 13, I was raped. After that, everything went downhill. I’ve been in and out of rehabilitation centers, jails, and prisons. I have four felony convictions and over 35 arrests. Upon release, I went back to drugs. How insane is that?

After being released on December 23, 2006, I finally had had enough. I celebrated Christmas and New Years Eve for the first time in five years with my family. I was tired of living in a self-made hell. I would cry out to God, “Why am I here?” “What is my purpose?” Already at rock bottom, I began to reflect on God’s Word. God tells us to completely surrender and cast all our burdens unto Him. We are also reminded that faith the size of a mustard seed can move a mountain. This new journey would require me to give up my best friend, my comforter, my drug.

I felt like a baby learning how to walk. Unlike before, when I felt myself falling, I had STH staff, my new friends, and my new-found trust in God to love and support me. It’s hard, but I’m off to a good start.

STH staff has never given up on me, and my friends have kept me encouraged. I pray that my testimony will help others to reach out when they are in need of help. I want to say thank you to all those wonderful people who have touched my life. I love you all!

Shared by a client of Sojourner Truth House
Associate Community Finalizes Mission Statement

In July 2007, the Associates officially adopted their first Mission Statement. The statement was the product of an eighteen month-long process that involved every Associate in the American Province.

A mission statement clearly tells who and what an organization is about. From the early years of the Associate movement, the Associates embraced the mission statement of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. In recent years, as the reality of the Associate movement has deepened spiritually and grown in its understanding of purpose, it became evident that a mission statement unique to the Associate Community would more clearly define its purpose and existence. Associates agreed in the early stages of the mission statement process that an Associate Mission Statement would most likely contain similarities to the PHJC Mission Statement. As mutual followers of the charism of Blessed Catherine Kasper, Associates and Poor Handmaid Sisters know that our missions are similar. However, because our vocational callings are unique in the two communities, living the mission would have its unique elements as well.

The Spiritual Family of Catherine Kasper, consisting of three distinct expressions: PHJC vowed members, Fiat Spiritus vowed members, and Associate covenantal members, examined each of the unique truths of the three expressions during Community Week and Gathering VII in June, 2007. A draft mission statement had been written by a representative group of Associates at about the same time. Following Community Week and Gathering VII, participating Associates, and the Associate Core Team, examined the draft statement and refined it. Finally, the statement was sent to all Associates who were asked to either affirm the statement or decline it. An overwhelming majority of Associates affirmed the statement as written, and it was therefore officially accepted.

The Mission Statement of the Associate Community

Associates are baptized adult men and women, called by the Holy Spirit

to share with others the charism of Blessed Catherine Kasper, the Foundress of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.

We do this by listening carefully to the Holy Spirit,
by acting courageously with compassion in our vocations,
and through joyful service to
our families, neighbors, communities, and the underserved.

As Associates in the Spiritual Family of Catherine Kasper, we embrace the core values of
community, dignity and respect for all, simplicity, and openness to the spirit.