The Four Pillars of Dominican Life:

Prayer
Study
Community
Ministry
Dear Friends,

May this springtime and season of new life bring renewed hope to all of us. The Council and I have been working diligently throughout this year to achieve the goals we as a community set last spring. We have continued to encourage the growth of our Dominican Family, lay women and men who study and live the Dominican charism. Our second group of Dominican Family completed their two-year formation and became committed Dominicans at a ceremony this April. These 29 women and men join our first group of 44 Dominicans. We are thrilled that our Dominican Family continues to grow and to thrive.

We have also taken many steps to strengthen our financial future. We have cut costs where possible, strengthened our retirement investments and increased our fundraising efforts with the help of our many wonderful and generous donors. We cannot thank you enough for supporting our mission, our ministries and our retired sisters through our Partners in Mission Annual Fund.

Because of you, our sisters can continue in their ministry of teaching – in schools like Queen of Peace in Houston and Holy Family in Galveston. They can continue their ministry in social services, such as working at Santa Maria Hostel, at St. Joseph’s Church with the poor and elderly, at a free clinic in Kerrville, or with Catholic Charities. And of course, your generosity helps us maintain – and repair – St. Dominic Villa where our retired sisters live. They are the ones who built many of the schools in the archdiocese and received little or no compensation. Thank you for remembering them.

We hope you enjoy reading all our good news, and as you read about the passing of five of our sisters, join us in remembering and in celebrating their wonderful, service-filled lives.

Blessings to you and your family this Easter season,

Carol Mayes, OP
Prioress

We gratefully acknowledge all those who contributed to this issue:
Sr. Fran Boddeker, OP
Sr. Assumpta Campbell, OP
Sr. Heloise Cruzat, OP
Sr. Linda Gibler, OP
Sr. Wanda Jinks, OP
Lynne Morris, Dominican Family
Sr. Miriam Olivros, OP
Denise Stasio, Dominican Family
Sr. Sharon Steglich, OP

Inside this issue:
Letter from the Prioress  2
Ministry Report  3
Community  4-5
Study & Prayer  6
In Memoriam  7
Community Garden

Student and service groups visit the Dominican Sisters’ garden to help and to learn. In December, students from YES Prep East End came to learn about the garden and to do service while here. The students and teachers spread tree mulch throughout the garden lanes and cleared and cleaned the storage shed. Our garden goals are two-fold: to donate organic produce to help those in need and to educate others with the practice of organic gardening in their local areas.

Care Ministry

Sr. Assumpta Campbell, OP has always had a close relationship with the elderly. Since 2003, she has lived in Taylor, Texas where she serves the Care Ministry at St. Mary’s Church. Sr. Assumpta visits the home bound and the local nursing and assisted living home. “Most of those I visit are in their eighties and nineties. It is a very heart warming and at times heart breaking ministry. I feel very blessed and hopeful to face my own aging experiences.”

Sr. Sharon Steglich, OP has returned to Houston after teaching for 27 years in Orange, Texas. Sr. Sharon taught first grade and second grade religion in Orange but this past fall decided to come to Houston to teach first grade at Queen of Peace, an archdiocesan school originally founded by the Houston Dominicans.

Teaching at Queen of Peace

Sr. Sharon teaches all subjects to her first graders, but her favorite subject to teach is religion. She says, “I also love teaching reading. It is so fun to see how much the children improve at the end of the year. I can take a poor child that knows very little, and by the end of the year she or he can read just about anything.” This is her 49th year teaching first grade, and she reports, “it looks like I will go for 50!”

Guatemala Ministry

Sr. Miriam Oliveros, OP reports that the children at San Vincente de Paul school participated, as they do each year, in the preparations for Holy Week. The children help to make the beautiful and colorful alfombra, a carpet handmade from colored paper. The alfombra is used during the celebrations that commemorate the passion, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ during the week. Pictured here, a procession of students are walking on the alfombra and carrying a statue of Jesus for the passion play.

Here in Houston, Sr. Fran Boddeker, OP (pictured below) will retire on June 17, 2011. Sr. Fran has served the Guatemala ministry here at home for the past sixteen years. She will be missed!
In October, Corpus Christi Catholic Church hosted the Archdiocesan Jubilee Celebration for the Priesthood and Consecrated Life. His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo celebrated the Mass. Sr. Leona Castle, OP (pictured left with Cardinal DiNardo) celebrated her 75th Jubilee. Sr. Barbara Cerno- sek, OP (top right) and Sr. Josephine Marie Godinich, OP (bottom right) celebrated their 50th jubilees. A reception for the jubilarians followed in Prefontaine Hall at Corpus Christi Parish.

In November, the sisters hosted their annual Arts & Craft show at St. Dominic Villa. Sisters displayed their paintings, ceramics, Christmas decorations, delicious baked goods and jams. Dominican Family members contributed items to the sale as well as volunteered their time to help out. The sale was our most successful, and guests enjoyed visiting with the Sisters and with friends. All donations benefitted the retired sisters.

Sisters at St. Dominic Villa never really retire. They continue to serve the mission of the Dominican Sisters in many ways. Sisters living at the Villa prepare for the Arts & Crafts show, assist with mailings to our constituents, help with the phones, work on the grounds, beautify the Villa chapel, help prepare for events at the Villa and Meeting Room, and help in the preparation of marmalade. Shown here, sisters are removing the seeds from the oranges used to make our marmalade.

Last fall, Pat Clark, principal of Assumption Catholic School, presented Sr. Marilyn Vanden Bosch, OP and Sr. Jo Rita Fertitta, OP with service awards from the National Catholic Educational Association. The NCEA recognized Sr. Marilyn for 38 years of service in Catholic education and recognized Sr. Jo Rita for 61 years of service in Catholic education. Many of their years were at Assumption.

Pictured here: Pat Clark with (from left to right) Sr. Jo Rita Fertitta, Sr. Francis Marie Bordages and Sr. Marilyn Vanden Bosch.
In January, the Sisters at the Villa held an Employee Appreciation luncheon honoring four employees. Two employees on the nursing staff, Arlessa Pleasant and Rosemary Boul, have served at the Villa for 15 years and ten years respectively. Judy Rollia and Otis Crump, who both work in food services, have served at the Villa for ten years and five years respectively. We are very thankful for the service they so graciously and generously provide.

“Our friends on the Villa staff are truly a gift to us. Their willingness to serve is inspiring.” Sr. Carol Mayes, OP

Pictured above: Odis Crump

Pictured above from left to right: Arlessa Pleasant, Doris Yordanoff (nurse manager), Rosemary Boul, Carol Mayes, OP, Judy Rollia and Ruby Wilson (food service manager).

“~Community~

Villa Employee Recognition

Dominican Family

“We, members of the Dominican Family, are called to embody the Dominican charism, seek Truth, preach the word of God, and promote the dignity of all persons. As part of the global Dominican Family, we commit ourselves to lives rooted in prayer, study, community and preaching. Through our gifts of diversity, we strive to grow together as co-creators of justice and peace.” This is the mission statement for the Dominican Family. The Houston Dominicans have three groups of Dominican Family members, all in different stages of their commitment to the Dominican way of life.

The first group in the Dominican Family has gone through the two-year formation process and became committed Dominicans for one year at the May 2010 Commitment Ceremony. For these Dominicans, this year was spent revisiting the pillars and living out the Dominican life. For example, Dominican Family members joined the sisters in the Advent Morning Praise and Brunch and were paired with prayer partners; members participated in a morning of service to the Houston immigrant community at Casa Juan Diego in March; members joined the sisters in Lenten prayer and study to participate meaningfully in the season; and in April members joined the sisters at the Villa for conversation and community time. For these 44 Dominicans, the next step was discernment and then recommitment for one, two or three years at the April 30, 2011 Commitment Ceremony and Eucharist.

The second group of Dominicans met six times this year as part of the second year in the formation process. With much excitement, the 29 men and women in this second group made their commitment and joined the ranks as Dominicans at the April 30th ceremony (pictured right). After the ceremony, members and their family and friends enjoyed a reception together at the Villa.

The third group of Dominican Family began the two-year formation process last fall. After the initial meeting, each meeting focused on one of the four pillars. Each meeting started with prayer in the Villa Chapel and then moved to the Meeting Room for discussion. We are so excited to have this group of 40 women and men exploring the Dominican charism.
On February 4-5, 2011, the Dominican Center for Spirituality sponsored a workshop entitled “Living a Spirituality of Hope in a Broken Planet.” Sr. Linda Gibler, OP, PhD, Associate Academic Dean at the Oblate School of Theology and Fr. Jim Conlon, PhD, Director of the Sophia Center at Holy Names University in Oakland California presented.

A main goal of the workshop was to make the connection between care of creation and the Dominican charism. The presenters linked a spirituality of hope to the Paschal mystery and the scriptures of the day.

A theme throughout the workshop was that in order to live a spirituality of hope, we often have to go through despair first. When we ignore the suffering that the planet and we are immersed in, we often become frozen or numb. Linda Gibler stated, “We all (each of us and the Earth community) rely on the promise that the Kingdom will come on Earth as Jesus taught us in the Lord’s Prayer.”

The presenters began the day by introducing a story about dates. Date trees take a long time to mature, and a person who plants a date tree is acting hopefully because she or he will never live long enough to eat the fruit the tree will eventually bear. Participants began and ended the workshop by eating dates as a sign of hoping for the future. The seeds from these dates were “planted” in a shallow tray filled with sand. Linda Gibler then took the seeds back to the Oblate School of Theology to be planted with other date trees on the property. After Saturday’s sessions, the event ended with a prayer ritual.

Many use the Labyrinth as a vehicle for prayer. In March, 8th grade students from St. Catherine’s Montessori came to our grounds for their retreat (pictured above walking the Labyrinth). During the retreat, students reflected on their years at St. Catherine’s and on their future. The retreat was a great way for students to reconnect with the school’s Dominican roots.

On December 18, 2010, we held our annual Advent Praise and Brunch. The event began with Morning Praise in the chapel at St. Dominic Villa. Each member of the Dominican Family connected with a Dominican Sister and shared advent brunch together. This year, we honored Sonja Novo for her many years of service to the Dominican Sisters.

Pictured clockwise: Carol Mayes, OP, Mary Beth Russell, a Dominican Family member who gave the reflection on the Scripture, and Sonja Novo
~In Memoriam~

**Sr. Lucy Sala, OP + (April 16, 1940—October 1, 2010)**
Sr. Lucy was born in Beaumont and attended St. Anthony’s. She joined the Dominican Sisters of Houston in 1959 and celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2009. She graduated from Dominican College and continued taking classes and workshops throughout her life to enhance her teaching career. Sr. Lucy taught in Houston, Nacogdoches, Port Arthur, Beaumont, St. Louis, Austin and Waxahachie. She was especially devoted to preschool and primary students, and she received their expressions of love and friendship even into their adulthood. Sr. Lucy said that her teaching experiences made her “a better person, a more Godly person.” Sr. Lucy embraced life to the fullest.

**Sr. Mary William Kowis, OP + (June 11, 1911—October 7, 2010)**
Sr. William’s life spanned almost a century. She was born in Plantersville, Texas and entered the Houston Dominicans on February 2, 1930. She served the Sisters in many locations including Houston, Orange, San Antonio, Taylor, Galveston, Nacogdoches, Beaumont, Austin and Whittier, California. Sr. William moved to St. Dominic Villa in 1983, where she worked tirelessly to bring comfort to our sick and aging sisters. In 2003, when Sr. William needed care herself, she continued her ministry of prayer for the community, her family and many others. Sr. William was always straightforward and kept her humor until the end of her life.

**Sr. Fidelis Enderle, OP + (January 5, 1921—November 5, 2010)**
Sr. Fidelis was born in Beaumont, one of fifteen children, and attended St. Anthony School. She joined the Dominican Sisters of Houston in 1941. Sr. Fidelis enjoyed her teaching, school administration and library ministries and served in Houston, Rosenberg, and San Bernardino and Riverside, California. Sr. Fidelis loved the tradition of study in the Dominican life and brought her knowledge to all her ministries. She continued to use her library skills during her retirement in the Dominican Archives and in the St. Dominic Villa library. Her love of creation was seen in her faithful feeding of the birds and animals at the Villa. Sr. Fidelis had a wonderful sense of community and was truly a friend to all who knew her.

**Sr. Marie Fertitta, OP + (August 27, 1922—December 3, 2010)**
Sr. Marie was born in Beaumont and joined the Dominican Sisters of Houston in 1940. She ministered as a teacher, librarian and administrator in schools in Houston, Orange, Rosenberg, Nacogdoches, Port Arthur, Austin and Whittier, California. She served her pastoral ministry in Austin, Abilene and Liberty County. Marie possessed an insatiable desire for knowledge and studied theology to experience a closer relationship to God. In retirement, Sr. Marie continued to serve as receptionist, secretary for the nursing floor at the Villa, and as a volunteer for S.E.A.R.C.H., for Lord of the Streets and in clown ministry. She was an excellent preacher and a woman of integrity, sincerity and loyalty who gave generously of her time and talents.

**Sr. Blanche Gothia, OP + (October 27, 1930—April 26, 2011)**
Sr. Blanche was born in Port Arthur and joined the Dominican Sisters in 1948. She graduated from Sacred Heart Dominican College and received her masters in library science from Texas Woman’s University. During her education ministry, she served in Houston, Orange, Lufkin, Galveston, La Marque, Beaumont and Wharton. She served as St. Agnes Academy’s librarian and media coordinator for 27 years. She also served as librarian at Mr. Carmel High School and part-time at the motherhouse of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament. Sr. Blanche loved to travel, to cook for others, and to nurture her students and all around her. Sr. Blanche treasured her many friendships and gave of herself and her talents generously.
Our Mission

We, the Houston Dominican Sisters, publicly commit ourselves to study and address the crucial justice issues of our time. We assume the risks inherent in preaching and teaching the Gospel.

We will work to transform social structures which oppress the powerless, ministering with them in our common struggle to remain faithful to the Word of God.

The Four Pillars of Dominican Life

Prayer
Study
Community
Ministry

Leadership
Carol Mayes, OP
Prioress
Antoinette “Kitty” Carter, OP
Vicarress
Julie Marie Greig, OP
Councilor
Patricia E. Casey, OP
Councilor

The Good News is published twice a year by the Dominican Sisters of Houston. Contact Laura Henderson for information or if you have a change of address at lhenderson@domhou.org 713.440.3707 713.440.4707 fax www.domhou.org

Dominican Sisters of Houston

To Praise ♡ To Bless ♡ To Preach

Our website has a new look!
We invite you to visit our website, which was recently redesigned by Denise Stasio, a faculty member at St. Agnes Academy and a member of the Dominican Family. We are so grateful to Denise for her many volunteer hours and great ideas.

www.domhou.org

DOMINICAN SISTERS’ SUMMER CAMP 2011!

Join the Dominican Sisters for our annual summer girls’ camp, July 10–16 at Circle Lake Camp in Pinehurst, Texas. The camp is open to 36 girls who have completed 5th-8th grades by May 2011. Activities include archery, baking, canoeing, singing, swimming, crafts and more. For more information call (936) 894-2141. Brochure and registration forms are on our website, www.domhou.org.

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