Inside this issue:

- Letter from the Prioress 2
- 2011 Jubilarians 3
- Ministry Report 4
- Study & Prayer 5
- Community 6
- Annual Report 7-19
- In Memoriam 19

The Four Pillars of Dominican Life:

- Prayer
- Study
- Community
- Ministry
Greetings
From the Prioress

Dear Friends,

Probably like many of you in the recent past, I watched the memorial services and the remembrance of the 9/11 event. There were many poignant moments, but I was especially struck by the recounting of many last phone calls from loved ones. Their last act was a simple, human occurrence. They called family and friends to say “I love you.” It is through these precious words that they will be remembered and carried in loved ones’ hearts.

What we would like to say to you is also a simple, human statement, “Thank you.” Appropriately, this issue includes our annual report of donors and gifts. As you will see, we list page after page of donors, and with each name, we count our blessings and thank God for you. You generously responded to our Partners in Mission Annual Fund Campaign, and consequently our Annual Fund increased by 76% from the year before. We are indeed grateful for all you have done for us in the past and humbly ask for your continued support in the future.

Because of your inspiring support, we have much to celebrate and to be grateful for in this issue of the Good News—our ministry work, our new novice, and the start of much needed renovation work at St. Dominic Villa, our retirement home. We also celebrate our growing Dominican Family. We now have 81 committed Dominican Family members to preach, to pray, and to study alongside our 81 Dominican Sisters! In November, we will host a dinner and introduction to the Dominican Family for all who are interested in learning about the Family and the Dominican charism. This new group, if they choose, will then begin formation in January 2012. Please let us know if you would like to join us!

We continue to carry you closely in our hearts and prayers. May God bless you, heal you and fill you with light.

Blessings to you and your family,

Carol Mayes, OP
Prioress

We gratefully acknowledge all those who contributed to this issue:

Sr. Mary Brenda, OP
Sr. Raphael Bordages, OP
Kelly Biddle, OP
Tommy Calais, Dominican Family
Sr. Pat Casey, OP
Sr. Heloise Cruzat, OP
Elaine Eichelberger, Dominican Family
Sr. Linda Gibler, OP
Sr. Mary Magdalen Hanel, OP
Sr. Wanda Jinks, OP
Sr. Carol Mayes, OP
Sr. Donna Pollard, OP
Sr. Ceil Roeger, OP
Sr. Lucia Sebescenay, OP
Sr. Therese Warden, OP
Sr. Mary Pat White, OP

Dominican Sisters of Houston Council: (left to right) Antoinette “Kitty” Carter, OP, Prioress Carol Mayes, OP, Patricia Casey, OP and Julie Marie Greig, OP

From left to right, Diamond Jubilarians Therese Warden, OP, Lucia Schexnayder, OP, Heloise Cruzat, OP, and Mary Pat White, OP and Silver Jubilarian Linda Gibler, OP.

2011 Diamond Jubilarians
(Sixty years)

Heloise Cruzat, OP:
Sr. Heloise is originally from All Saints Parish in Houston. She is a graduate of St. Agnes Academy and began teaching at St. Agnes in 1955. Sr. Heloise served as principal at St. Agnes and later at St. Pius X High School. After being on the General Council of the Dominican Sisters, she served as Priorress from 1998 to 2004. Sr. Heloise is currently Vicar for Religious for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. She is an ESL teacher and also serves as liaison for the Dominican Sisters’ Community Garden. “My diamond celebration continues to be a marvelous time for giving thanks and making a recommitment to God’s service. It is a treasured opportunity to celebrate lasting friendships and companionship.”

Lucia Schexnayder, OP:
Sr. Lucia is originally from Blessed Sacrament Parish in Houston and graduated from St. Agnes Academy. She has taught in schools in the dioceses of Galveston-Houston, Beaumont, Los Angeles and San Bernardino since 1953 and is the founding principal of both St. Catherine’s in Port Arthur and St. Thomas More in Houston. Sr. Lucia has ministered as Director of Activities and Administrator of Family Relations for St. Dominic Nursing Home and also served as Administrator of St. Dominic Villa. Sr. Lucia presently works as Social Minister at St. Joseph’s Parish in Houston. “As I reflected on my sixty years as a Dominican, I first sensed disbelief that it is indeed true; then I was filled with an overwhelming feeling of gratitude. I am grateful to God for my vocation, my health and my ability to continue in ministry these sixty years. I am grateful to my Dominican community for their love and continued support.”

Therese Warden, OP:
Sr. Therese is originally from All Saints Parish in Houston and graduated from St. Agnes Academy. Beginning in 1953, she taught in schools in the dioceses of Galveston-Houston, Beaumont, San Bernardino and Los Angeles and served some years as principal. She has served as Formation Director and Promoter of Preaching for the community. Sr. Therese retired this year from St. Pius X High School after 27 years of service to the school. “Our celebration of sixty years as Dominican Sisters was a beautiful and glorious day with family, friends and co-workers present. It is a day not to be forgotten.”

Mary Pat White, OP:
Sr. Mary Pat is originally from Christ the King Parish in Houston and graduated from St. Agnes Academy. Starting in 1952, she taught in schools in the dioceses of Galveston-Houston and Beaumont. From 1970 - 2003, she taught driver’s education at St. Agnes. After leaving St. Agnes, Sr. Mary Pat continued her driving ministry in service to the community. She is now retired. “My brothers and their wives and nephews and nieces made my day so happy. Several of them had to travel a distance, so I was especially grateful that they could be here. Of course, I was happy to be with my sisters who were also celebrating. They were so good to me, and the number of cards and gifts I received was unbelievable. I don’t deserve all of it, but people are so good.”

2011 Silver Jubilarian
(Twenty-five years)

Linda Gibler, OP:
Sr. Linda is originally from Sacred Heart Parish in Groton, Connecticut and graduated from Randolph High School in New Jersey. She has ministered in the diocese of Galveston-Houston as Director of Social Ministry at Prince of Peace Parish, Lead Case Manager at the Texas Department of Health, and Core Staff at Genesis Farm in New Jersey. She currently serves on the Formation Team of the Dominican Sisters and lectures on Religion and Ecology. Sr. Linda is presently Associate Academic Dean at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. “When people congratulated me for my Jubilee, I barely knew how to respond. My 25 years of Dominican life has been a joy rather than an accomplishment. I have felt the love, care, challenge, and support of my congregation the entire time. So for me the Jubilee celebration was about acknowledging 25 years of receiving my Dominican life as a gift. I am grateful to all of my sisters, especially those who walked closest with me in my early years as a sisters. They welcomed me and set me on a path I have treasured ever since.”
Summer Camp!

Thirty campers along with their ten counselors from St. Pius X High School had a great time during the 9th annual Dominican Sisters Summer Camp at Circle Lake in July. Young girls who were entering 6th through 9th grade this fall participated in this special week of summer fun. Throughout the week campers enjoyed a variety of activities such as archery, IG challenge games, swimming, baking, arts & crafts, music lessons, wood carving, skit night, dancing, movie night and more. Sr. Mary Brenda, OP created a camp website this year where campers, parents, counselors and camp staff could post messages and pictures and blog about their camp experience!

Justice Award

On August 18, 2011, the Houston Interfaith Worker Justice Center held its Celebration Gala. During the evening, the Dominican Sisters of Houston and Sr. Ceil Roeger, OP received the Faith Community Award for standing in solidarity with the Worker Center consistently over the years: “Whether helping to draft a personnel policy, accompanying workers to demand their pay from their former employers, providing a meal for a worker assembly or leading a prayer at a vigil, the Dominicans are in it for the long haul.” The Worker Justice Center celebrated five years of fighting for justice in the workplace for low-wage workers.

Ministry Retirement

Last May the faculty and staff at St. Pius X High School recognized Sr. Therese Warden for her 27 years of ministry to the St. Pius Community. Sr. Therese was toasted and roasted by the faculty, staff, family, fellow Dominicans and Council at her retirement celebration. Sr. Therese taught math for 24 years at Pius and spent her last three years organizing its archives.

Mary Magdalen Hanel, OP - Trading in her Veil for Many Hats

Sr. Mary Magdalen wears many hats in her ministry work. She teaches part-time at three schools, is part-time archivist for her community since 2006 and tends to the gardening outside the Spirituality Center Meeting Room. She teaches religion to three, four and five year olds at St. Catherine’s Montessori and St. Francis of Assisi and teaches all grades at Our Lady of Fatima School in Texas City. Sr. Mary Magdalen teaches the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, based on Montessori principles, which introduces a child to the Scriptures and liturgy through the use of hands-on materials. “This is my 52nd year of teaching. I love the independent work aspect of the Montessori approach, and the theme of the Good Shepherd has personally enhanced my religious life—and hopefully the children’s!”

As for being the Houston Dominicans’ archivist, “I really get excited when I find some information that someone wants from way back when...and realize what our Sisters have done and in what places they have served.”

She inherited her love of gardening from her mother. “At Our Lady of Lourdes, I squeeze time in for the older students to plant, weed, gather seeds, and observe the nature of things. We’ve had Monarch and Gulf Fritillary caterpillars hatch at school and then released them—what a sight!” She will have plants and many seeds to sell at the Sisters’ Arts & Crafts Sale in November. Of her many hats, Sr. Mary Magdalen says, “My family, Sisters, co-workers and students have enriched my life and I am truly edified and grateful. Shalom and Deo gratias!”
~Study & Prayer~

**Dominican Novices**

On August 8th, Kelly Biddle was received as a novice with the Dominican Sisters of Houston, thus entering into the next stage of her journey in religious life. On August 18 Kelly left Houston for St. Louis, Missouri, to attend the Collaborative Dominican Novitiate for much of her canonical novitiate year.

Kelly shared her thoughts on her journey:

“For the next 10 months, I will be devoting myself to a time of intense prayer, study, contemplation, and discernment as I seek to know God's will in my path towards becoming a Dominican Sister and taking the vows of religious life.

During my time in St. Louis, I will be living with two other novices -- Krissie Koll, OP and Chris DeAnna, OP and two Novice Directors. In addition, I will be attending classes at the Aquinas Institute, which is affiliated with St. Louis University. I am excited about this, as I have never taken a theology course before (my background is in the sciences)! More important than the day-to-day activities, though, is what this year represents. It is a chance to fully immerse myself in the Dominican ideals of study and prayer, to explore my vocation and discern where God is calling me to be, and to deepen my relationship with God in ways that will sustain me throughout the rest of my life. This is a wonderful opportunity, and I intend to take full advantage of it.

I am grateful to God and the Dominican Sisters of Houston for making this novitiate year possible. In my last year as an associate and eight months as a candidate, it has been a pleasure to get to know my sisters in this community. I am in awe of their devotion to ministry and God's call, the depth of their feeling and action on social and justice issues, and the reverence they give to all aspects of God's creation. I am continually and delightfully amazed that they have embraced me as a part of the congregation and welcomed me into their lives. I have truly loved my time here, and though I leave for a short furlough, I hope the relationships and connections that have been built and nurtured here continue for a long time to come.”

**International Day for Peace**

On September 21, students from St Pius X and St. Agnes Academy observed the United Nations’ International Day for Peace at the Dominican Sisters’ Spirituality Center. Students gathered with sisters and the campus ministers from both schools to pray for an end to violence in our world. At the end of the prayer service, which was led by Sr. Ceil Roeger, OP, students rang bells, just as the Peace Bell is rung at the UN headquarters. This prayer service has become a tradition with the sisters and students.

**Discernment**

Over the weekend of September 9th, the Houston Dominicans hosted a discernment for young women interested in vowed religious life. Three young women came to the convent to learn more about the Dominican charism. Alison Ayala (pictured center below) and Julia Fracker (below right) came from San Antonio, and Lupe Lazalde (below left) is a Houstonian. The women experienced the four pillars of Dominican life during the weekend through sessions with eight of our Dominican Sisters. They also met many other Houston Dominicans during prayer and community times.
We welcome Sisters Mary Oanh Ta and Mary Thao Vu (pictured right), members of the Congregation of Lovers of the Holy Cross from Thanh Hoa diocese in Vietnam. They are attending Houston Community College and are staying with the Villa community to help perfect their English. Sr. Clarice Sparkman, OP, who resides at the Villa (pictured right also), tutors the sisters in English in the mornings.

This not the first time sisters from Vietnam have lived in community with the Houston Dominicans. In November 1976, two sisters joined the community to learn English. Sr. Sabina Jansing, OP is pictured left teaching Sisters Rosa and Marguerite. Over the past 25 years, other sisters from Vietnam have lived here in community while learning English and attending school.

On Saturday, September 24th, committed members of the Dominican Family and Dominican Sisters met to connect with each other and then were inspired by a presentation from Sr. Margaret Ormond, OP, entitled, 500 Years from Now: Will they remember the fire of our preaching? Sr. Margaret is the prioress for the Dominican Sisters of Peace in Columbus, Ohio.

Sr. Margaret encouraged all present to preach for justice with the same fire of the 16th century Dominicans who arrived in Hispaniola and set the world on fire with their preaching for the justice of the indigenous people. Sr. Margaret reiterated what the U.S. Bishops have stated - that action on behalf of justice “is a constitutive part of preaching the gospel.”

She encouraged us 21st century Dominicans to see and to hear the reality of injustice in our midst; to befriend the weak; and to speak out on behalf of the oppressed. She encouraged those present to extend this inclusion and love to our suffering brothers and sisters among us.

In October the two committed groups of Dominican Family will meet to join as one group, and this meeting will be the first time Dominican Family members will facilitate the entire meeting. At this October meeting, Dwight Wolf, a psychotherapist, will discuss the importance and the skills of communicating. In November, Sr. Linda Gibler, OP will speak to the committed group on “Spirituality and the Universe,” and in December, the group will join the Dominican Sisters at their annual Advent Prayer and Brunch. There are currently 81 committed Dominican Family members and 81 Dominican Sisters.

This year, the men and women in the second year of Formation will deepen their understanding of the Dominican charism and spend time discussing how to live it in their daily lives. They will also have a presentation on social justice and finally an evening of discernment to see if they choose to make commitment to live the charism for one year. On April 29, 2012, the feast of St. Catherine of Siena, those who choose will make their commitment at a Eucharist and commitment ritual.

For a few years now, our sisters’ retirement home, St. Dominic Villa, has greatly needed renovations. Thanks to our generous individual donors and foundations, we have been able to begin those renovations. This fall we will complete four of five phases to replace plumbing and the heating and cooling system at the Villa. All the sisters and staff are so grateful that there will be no more plumbing back-ups and better air quality at the Villa!

Thank you!
Thank you! We are truly blessed to have such generous and loyal support from so many donors. Thank you for valuing the mission and ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Houston and for allowing us to carry out successfully our work for the people of God. Your gifts to our Partners in Mission Annual Fund are inspiring and support all of our sisters’ work. Your loyal support of San Vicente de Paul School in Guatemala helps to enrich the lives of so many children. And finally, your generosity towards our retired sisters is deeply appreciated. Thank you for honoring them for their many, many years of service in the Houston-Galveston area and well beyond. May God bless you, heal you and fill you with light.

Annual Report of Gifts
August 1, 2010—July 31, 2011

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We are deeply grateful to these individuals who gave leadership gifts to our Partners in Mission Annual Fund during the August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2011 fiscal year. We are blessed to have their faithful commitment to our mission.

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We hope we have correctly recognized each gift and friend. If we have missed your name or if it is listed incorrectly, please accept our sincerest apologies and call the Advancement Office at 713.440.3710.

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### 2010-2011 Gift Report
(Gifts received from August 1, 2010—July 31, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Giving</td>
<td>$967,180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partners in Mission Annual Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retirement Fund</td>
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<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>$47,120</td>
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<td>Honors &amp; Memorials</td>
<td>$37,540</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$109,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Gifts</td>
<td>$44,050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On May 1st, we held a reception for our Dominican Society donors in recognition of their commitment to our mission.

Clockwise: Sr. Carol Mayes, OP & Most Reverend Bishop Vincent Rizzotto; Judy and Greg Schockling; Kay and Larry Tanner; Carmen and George Armistead; and Lynne and Mike Morris
In Memoriam

Gift in Memory of ~
Gift given by ~

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Ouida Abercrombie
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18
In Memoriam

Sister Julian Giglio, OP + (January 29, 1923—June 14, 2011)

Sr. Julian was born in Beaumont and educated by the Dominican Sisters at St. Anthony School. She joined the Dominican Sisters in 1942 and served her God and her congregation as a Dominican Sister for 70 years. She began her education ministry at St. Mary’s, Port Arthur in the 1940’s. After eight years in Port Arthur, Sr. Julian ministered many years in Houston at St. Christopher’s and served a year in Riverside, California. She returned to Houston to be founding principal of St. Jerome’s School in 1962, and in 1969 she became a founding principal again at Northwest Junior High, which later became Seton Jr. High. In 1980 Sr. Julian returned to the Beaumont area and served as principal at St. Anne’s and St. Catherine’s. In 2001, she and Barbara Collins, OP founded The Literacy Center in Galveston, which flourishes today with many dedicated volunteer teachers. Sr. Julian had many gifts and talents and used all of them so generously for her family, her Dominican Sisters and her many friends and students.
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
Vicaress
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
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Save the Date!

November 4 & 5 - Annual Arts & Crafts Show at the Villa
6504 Almeda (Friday 9 am - 4 pm and Saturday 9 am to noon)

December 1st - Shop at Ten Thousand Villages, 2424A Rice Blvd.
(15% of all purchases will benefit the Dominican Sisters of Houston)

February 4th - Winter Conference with speaker Donald Goergen, OP
Dominican Center for Spirituality Meeting Room, 6501 Almeda Rd.

Goodbye to our Beautiful Old Oak

Our old Oaken Landmark is taking its last bow. It has graced our grounds for untold ages.

As time sped by it has weathered many storms and hurricanes. It is battered now and a hazard to our safety. It is humbly surrendering its life to make room for a young sapling to have the opportunity to grace our holy grounds with its beauty.

As we muse about our Oak we recall how it bowed and curtsied to the Sweet Sacred Heart whose arms are outstretched in blessing. In the Oak's youth it sported its fresh green leaves and began to take on its oakish shape. New growth popped out and developed, limbs strengthened and reached heavenward and swayed with the gentle breezes. Its shade invited one to rest awhile and breathe in the wonders of God's gift of nature and contemplate God's love even in the shade of this beautiful Oak. In the passing of time, life and strength began to wane. Signs of old age took its toll and signs of painful osteoporosis were evident. With dignity it humbly bowed to the will of its Maker.

Now, let us honor and mourn the passing of our beautiful Oak who served us so well, yes, it lovingly served as only an OAK was made to serve. Amen.

Sr. Raphael Bordages, OP
8-17-11