Dear Friends,

Reading over this issue of the *Good News*, I reflected on the ways that we as Dominicans try to fulfill our mission. Our mission statement calls us to study and address current justice issues; to preach and teach the Gospel without regard to the risk; and to help the powerless in our world.

The stories in this issue show some of the ways in which we try to live our mission statement today. Through our justice ministry, we continue to raise awareness of and pray for issues such as economic justice, human trafficking, immigration, and the environment. We continue to collaborate with other congregations in ministry, study, and prayer. Our Dominican Family continues to grow and to keep our Dominican charism vibrant. Our sisters in ministry preach the gospel in their work in schools, parishes, and social agencies. With our Guatemala mission school, we hope to give a future to our students by giving them a good Catholic education and a chance to end living in poverty.

I am fond of quoting the words of Meister Eckhart, a fourteenth century Dominican: “If the only prayer you say in your life is ‘thank you’ that would suffice.” While we remain true to our mission, as importantly we remain so very grateful to all of you, our friends. Thank you for your faithful support, which helps us to serve the people of God and to take care of our retired sisters who have served our mission so well for so many years.

Blessings on you and your families,

Carol Mayes, OP
Prioress

---

**ON THE COVER**

Stations of the Cross located in the gardens at St. Dominic Villa, the Dominican Sisters’ retirement home. The Stations were created by Sr. Mary Peter Tremonte, OP.

---

**Thank YOU**

We gratefully acknowledge all those who contributed to this issue:

- Sr. Patricia Casey, OP
- Sr. Eleanor Cresap, OP
- Sr. Heloise Cruzat, OP
- Sr. Mary Magdalen Hanel, OP
- Sr. Wanda Jinks, OP
- Sr. Carol Mayes, OP
- Sr. Miriam Oliveros, OP
- Sr. Gertrude Pena, OP
- Sr. Donna Pollard, OP
- Paula Porter, Dominican Family
- Sr. Ceil Roeger, OP
- Lauri Ruiz, Dominican Family
- Mary Anne Sigur
JUSTICE PROMOTERS

The Central South Dominican Justice Promoters gathered for their annual meeting in April at the Dominican Sisters of Houston Motherhouse. Carlos Duarte of Mi Familia Vota joined the group to discuss his nonpartisan organization’s work to register Latino voters and shared powerful stories of people affected by current immigration laws. The group also deepened its understanding of climate change. Members discussed the efforts their religious communities were taking and discussed how Dominicans might work as members of the faith community to address its escalating effects. Along with immigration reform and the environment, the group also discussed such topics as economic injustice, human trafficking and the use of social media to effectively preach peace and justice.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

On February 9th our sisters joined in a celebration of 100 years of Catholic education in the Port Arthur area hosted by St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School in Port Arthur. Over 400 guests attended and enjoyed reuniting with sisters, priests, teachers, and former classmates from their school years. Bishop Curtis J. Guillory, SVD celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving, and Knights of Columbus Councils from Groves, Nederland, and Port Neches provided a wonderful dinner. Schools that participated in the event included St. Mary, Sacred Heart, St. James, St. Joseph, Immaculate Conception, St. Charles, St. Elizabeth, St. Therese the Little Flower, St. Catherine, Central Catholic, Sister Thea Bowman, and Bishop Byrne High School. Among our sisters who attended the celebration was Sr. Lucia Schexnayder, OP, the first principal of St. Catherine.

GREETINGS FROM SAN VICENTE

From San Vicente, our school in Guatemala, Sr. Miriam Oliveros, OP reports that the school year, which began in January, is passing quickly. “Here in Guatemala, we celebrate everything! We have had celebration days for our national tree, our public servants, Mothers’ Day and our religious holidays.” For Holy Week, the children commemorated Jesus’ washing of the feet, the Last Supper and the Stations of the Cross. “Besides all of these activities, the children are doing their best in their subjects. They like school and are happy to come each day. Thanks to our benefactors, for whom we pray every day, we are able to provide a good education to our children.”
DONOR APPRECIATION

In May we thanked our donors during a reception at St. Dominic Villa, the Sisters’ retirement home. Over eighty guests and Sisters enjoyed visiting together. Prioress Sr. Carol Mayes, OP expressed gratitude on behalf of all the Sisters to all our donors who give to our ministries, retirement, and Guatemala mission school. Afterwards, four Vietnamese Sisters, who are residing at the Villa while they attend school, performed a song and dance of thanksgiving for our guests.
DOMINICAN FAMILY

In April, eighteen members of our Dominican Family made their First Commitment during our Commitment Eucharist and Ceremony. Fr. John Rooney presided at the ceremony, and new Dominican Family officers were installed. After the ceremony, family and friends shared a lovely reception at the Villa with the Sisters. New member Paula Porter described her two-year formation: “Since I was Catholic educated but not Dominican educated, I thought the Dominican Family would provide me with a better understanding of the charism of the Dominicans. I actually came away with a better understanding of myself in regards to my spirituality. I look forward to continuing this journey.”

Our Dominican Family has grown to almost 130 members. Over twenty individuals will begin their second year of formation in September to continue to explore whether they would like to join the Dominican Family.

VOW RENEWAL

In May Sr. Mary Oanh Ta and Sr. Mary Thao Vu renewed their vows in the hands of their superior at a ceremony in the chapel at St. Dominic Villa, our retirement home. For the past three years, these two Sisters from the Lovers of the Holy Cross Congregation in Vietnam have lived at the Villa while learning English and attending the University of St. Thomas. Several religious from the Vietnamese community and our community as well as many friends attended the ceremony and afterwards enjoyed delicious Vietnamese cuisine.

DOMINICAN SISTERS Honored

Immaculate Conception Parish in the community of Moral, Texas honored four Dominican Sisters from the area. As an expression of their appreciation for the Sisters, the parishioners installed a monument that marks where the old and the new expansion of the cemetery meet. Retired Houston Dominican Sr. Gertrude Pena, OP, designed the monument at the request of the Parish. The dedication ceremony included Mass celebrated by Fr. R. B. Williams, OP with a blessing of the monument and a luncheon afterward. The monument is engraved with the names of Houston Dominicans Sr. Emerita Pena, Sr. Celestine Pena, and Sr. Gertrude Pena and Lufkin Dominican Sr. Veronica Poskey.
ADVENT PRAYER
In December we hosted our annual Advent Morning Prayer and Brunch. During Morning Prayer, Sr. Donna Pollard, OP reflected on the meaning of light in Advent season, a season in which days become shorter and evenings fill with darkness. Scripture tells us that God provided the nativity star to serve as a “guide” for a group of travelers from the East who were interested in finding the Christ Child – the light. Sr. Donna suggested that during Advent and Christmas we might look at the star a little differently: “God always provides travel guides to us as faithful people. Hasn’t God provided each of us a travel guide—someone who leads us to Christ?” Our travel guide might have been a parent, grandparent, teacher or friend. Sr. Donna noted that our guide might not be a bright celestial guide as in scripture, but a mere human, “so we must be both humble and responsive and allow God to lead us to Christ our light.”

After Morning Prayer, Sr. Carol Mayes, OP presented Diana Folse, Joe Sousa, and Mary Ann and Richard Keller with the Pauline Gannon award for service to our community. Diana Folse and Joe Sousa have volunteered in our community gardens for many years, and the Kellers have hosted monthly bingo at St. Dominic Villa for our retired Sisters for many years as well. Sr. Carol presented the volunteers with a framed sculpture entitled “Praising Angel,” limited edition pieces by Sr. Mary Peter Tremonte, OP.

“LISTENING FOR THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD”
In February we hosted a workshop at our Center for Spirituality given by Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI. The title of Fr. Rolheiser’s workshop was “Listening for the Heartbeat of God: Discipleship in John’s Gospel.” Rolheiser used the gospel of John to stress God’s unconditional love for us and discussed how we should then live out our daily lives according to John’s gospel. One memorable insight Fr. Rolheiser shared is that two tragedies potentially exist in our lives before we die: to have never loved in life and to have never expressed our love to loved ones.

Fr. Rolheiser has been president of...
Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio since 2005. Before then, he taught for many years at Newman Theological College in Edmonton Alberta, CA and served his religious community. Fr. Rolheiser has written eleven books and numerous articles and writes a weekly column published in over 65 Catholic papers worldwide.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In May, Sr. Ceil Roeger, OP, who is a member of the speaker’s bureau for Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition (HRRC), presented a workshop on human trafficking for our Dominican Family. The Dominican Sisters of Houston are members of HRRC, a coalition of non-profits, faith-based organizations, and government and law enforcement agencies whose purpose is to prevent and confront modern day slavery through education, training and empowering the community to take action.

During the workshop, Sr. Ceil defined human trafficking and reported on the efforts in Houston to confront the problem. Human trafficking is the second largest criminal industry in the world and the fastest growing. Human trafficking is modern day slavery, and its victims (over 21 million globally) are subjected to force, fraud, or coercion, for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Victims are young children, teenagers, men and women. Labor and sex trafficking can occur in many businesses and areas of work such as strip clubs, massage parlors, modeling studios, agricultural work, restaurants, nail salons, domestic servitude, peddling, and traveling sales crews.

Lauri Ruiz, a Dominican Family member who attended the workshop, was surprised by the scope of the problem, especially here in Houston which is a major trafficking hub. Lauri commented, “While it is daunting to think about trying to make a difference in regard to such a big problem, we know that educating ourselves is the first step, and that many steps together can lead us down the right path.”

Sr. Ceil discussed different ways that the community can take action through reporting suspected slavery, education, prayer, and advocating for freedom with the legislature and other grass roots organizations. Sr. Ceil stated that one simple but important way to take action against modern day slavery is to buy fair trade products such as chocolate, tea, and coffee. The fair trade system guarantees a fair wage to workers and guarantees to consumers that the product was not made with slave labor.

IN Memoriam

Sister Justin Farinella, OP +

AUGUST 24, 1921 - DECEMBER 28, 2013

Sr. Justin was born in Beaumont, Texas and graduated from St. Anthony High School. Sr. Justin entered the Houston Dominican Congregation in September 1939. She received her BA from Dominican College and a MA in Religious Education from the University of St. Thomas. Sr. Justin took advantage of every educational opportunity possible throughout her life. She served as teacher or principal in Houston at Christ the King, St. Christopher, Sacred Heart, and St. Francis de Sales (as founding principal); in Port Arthur at St. Mary; and in Whittier, California at St. Gregory (also as founding principal). Sr. Justin served the Congregation for eight years as Formation Director and as a member of the Council. She also served as Director of Religious Education at St. Frances Cabrini in Houston and at St. Charles in Nederland. In 1987 Sr. Justin and Sr. Rita Owens, OP founded a ministry for homeless women, Wellsprings, which has served over 1000 women since its inception. Sr. Justin remained actively involved in Wellsprings until 2005 and continued in a supportive role until her death. Her gifts of vision, fidelity, determination, and indefatigable work brought blessings to so many.
Today's Kindness Grows Tomorrow's Blessings

The Dominican Sisters of Houston's legacy in Catholic education and services is deep rooted, and we continue today to serve and to preach the Gospel. When you name the Dominican Sisters of Houston as a beneficiary of your will, life insurance policy, trust, or retirement plan, you help ensure the future of our mission. If support of our mission and sisters is part of your legacy giving in your will or estate plans, please let us know. We would love to thank you for your generous commitment. If you are considering remembering the sisters as part of your estate planning, please contact us today at 713.440.3707.

DOMINICAN REMEMBRANCE
A Dominican for life. A gift for eternity.

Save the Date

JUNE 29TH - JULY 5TH
Dominican Sisters Summer Camp at Circle Lake Retreat Center in Pinehurst, Texas. For information call (281) 684-8011; brochure and registration forms are on our website, www.domhou.org.

SEPTEMBER 16TH
Labyrinth Walk for Freedom; Center for Spirituality Meeting Room, 6501 Almeda Rd.