

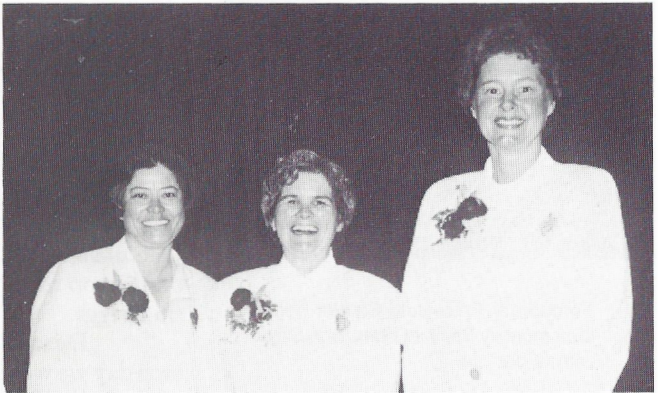


# *Joyful Apostolate*

Fall 1999

## **Preparations Filled With Joyful Gratitude!**

Enthusiastic expectation is mounting as we prepare to celebrate the great 2000th anniversary of the coming of Jesus among us. We become more aware of His wondrous ways of continually coming to us, in Sister Ida's words: "God is always coming — in His own style." Rejoice with us as we share some highlights of His coming into our hearts and our lives, to our community, into the hearts of the people whom we reach.



Left to right: Sister Rosario Davila, Sister Frances Kennedy, Sister Diane Heiss.

## **3x25 Years of Faithful Love.**

On August 7th, we celebrated three silver jubilarians. It was a joyful day for the Church, for steadfast love and for our community as our Sisters renewed and rededicated their love and lives to Our Lord, best described by their own words.

Sister Diane Heiss: "Our Lord's greatest blessing to me is His invitation to live in intimate loving union with Him."

Sister Frances Kennedy: "With deep joy I recognize that it is God's love that sustains and enfolds me every day."

Sister Rosario Davila: "My faithfulness is a twinkle of a star in comparison to Christ's faithful love for me."

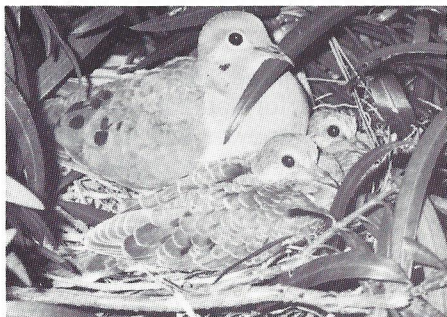
# *A Year of*



The community gathers to enjoy a festive lunch following Rachael Gleason's entrance ceremony. Front row right to left: Sister Mary, Sister Jane, Sister Ida, Rachael Gleason, Sister Lucia, Sister Frances.



Temporary Professed Sisters begin their monthly Spiritual Formation Days with Sister Ida.



The doves of Sister Ida's story.

# of Pilgrimage,

**My Dear Friends in Jesus Christ:**

**Thank you** for your personal greetings and many prayers , you have been wonderfully supportive in my suffering, ever since I was diagnosed with lymphoma over four years ago.

**This is an extraordinary time** in my life. I find myself surprised that I am able to write to you. It is early October, and last December I adjusted my heart —after my doctor's diagnosis— to what I believed was God's plan: that I would not have more than six months to live. Recently, feeling quite well, I am re-adjusting my heart to God's plan. All our Sisters continue asking the intercession of Blessed Faustina!

**In the light of the Great Jubilee**, Sister Jane asked me to write to you about Grace since we are on the threshold of **the Year of Grace**. Most of you know that at times I like to illustrate a point with a story. Please, allow me to share an experience I had this summer which revealed to me the hope and desire of God's Heart for each of us and for the universe that His love called into being.

**One morning in June**, I noticed a bird's nest outside my bedroom window. At that time, not feeling as well as I do now, I was resting in a chair facing the window a good part of the day. When I saw a little dove, I became quite excited and called Sister Jane and Sister Yolanda to verify my discovery: a nest on the top of a bush and a little dove sitting on two small eggs.

**Dear friends**, for the next three weeks, each day we woke up with joy to anticipate the arrival of the baby birds and witness the patterns of care of the parent doves. It was a great spiritual insight for me. Each day the male bird arrived around 9:00 a.m. and rested on an awning nearby. He waited patiently and when the female bird left the nest, he would settle in to sit on the little eggs for the next 12 hours. The mother would return around 7:00 p.m., rest on the awning and patiently wait to take her place in the nest for the night.

I found myself becoming more and more involved with their life and quite a bit attached to them. Finally the little birds were hatched and we took pictures of them. Then the day arrived when the dove family, mom, dad, and the two little doves left the nest.

# Prayer and J

How does "the story of the doves" connect with the Jubilee year and Grace? Dear friends, throughout my experience with the little birds, I realized that I had no real relationship with them, yet, I had feelings of protection, hope, delight, worry and affection for them. They did not even know that I existed, — and still they completely delighted me and brought me joy. I could spend time just watching this beautiful mother and father in the nest, motionless, not doing anything special; they were only doing exactly what they were created to do, and in that they were so lovable and admirable!

I realized in my heart that if I was so touched by these birds that had no connection with me, then how must God, infinite Love, look at me and be towards me! He is connected to me and has invested in me so very much: in love, forgiveness, healing and life. I could just see Him "stare" at me in delight and wonder, as I stared at those little birds doing nothing significant, nothing noteworthy, they just did what they were created to do.

This is Grace dear friends, to recognize and to respond to God's unfathomable love: to live knowing that He takes delight in us and "spends His days" looking at us, caring for us, protecting us and loving us. Grace is knowing that we belong to God not simply as a Deity but as a Father. That we, in Baptism are truly His sons and daughters, and that He has the Heart of a Parent because He is our Origin.

A year of Favor — a year of Grace— means to get ready to enter into a deeper, closer personal relationship and union with our God. To be showered with love, understanding, wisdom and peace by a loving Parent, to be forgiven and healed by His Son and embraced in His Spirit of love, truth and peace.

Please join us on January 2, 2000, for the Day of Pilgrimage, Prayer and Jubilation, —this day of Grace!

*See you there!*

*♥ your Sister Ida*

# *ubilation!*



## *Preparing for January 2, 2000*



We gathered at our Novitiate property in Chatsworth to develop in greater detail the plans and movement of the Jubilee Celebration on January 2nd.

Above: Sister Jane points out the space where the large tent for gathering and Mass will be. Center: Sister Elizabeth and Sister Diane mark the spots for Confession stations. Below: Location of the tent for the Blessed Sacrament Chapel is measured as well as the initial path for the Eucharistic procession.



# *God Sends Us Into the Harvest To Bring His Message of Love!*

## **In Minnesota**

For four days, some 145 zealous young adults welcomed Sister Doreen and Sister Cecilia in the National Evangelization Team training camp. As our Sisters spoke about religious life and faith, they brought encouragement and inspiration to the NET volunteers. Our Sisters were called "the leaven" in their midst!

## **In Oklahoma City**

"Lord, I lift Your Name High" and "Journey to the Heart of the Father" were the themes of the two day-retreats that Sister Joanna and Sister Michelle gave to 400 students in Bishop McGuinness High School, with the enthusiastic help of 30 leaders. Youth ministers from eight parishes attended, grateful for receiving new ideas, "in both content and fun," they said. A student was overheard saying: "I just had an awesome retreat, I am really pumped!"

## **All Across Korea**

The Holy Spirit is active in the hearts of hundreds of thousands who watch our Sacred Heart Kids' Club video program on the new Catholic Peace Channel. The Archdiocese of Seoul dubbed all 30 half-hour tapes into Korean and broadcasts them for three years before 2000 as a national evangelization project. In the privacy of their homes, many families have the opportunity to come to know about Christianity for the first time; it gives them the desire to begin their faith journey to conversion.

## **Continually In California**

As a significant catechetical community in the Los Angeles Archdiocese and in the Diocese of Orange, in the fall our Sisters continue their parish life ministry from the northern La Purisima Mission in Lompoc to St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in the inner city of Los Angeles to Holy Spirit and Our Lady of Pilar in Orange County. We reach tens of thousands of children, youth and families year after year in Southern California through our leadership in RCIA, Catechist Formation, as Directors of Religious Education and Confirmation programs. This year's programs are charged with enthusiastic preparations for the Third Millennium!