

# Joyful Jubilee Newsletter

SOCIETY DEVOTED TO THE SACRED HEART



September 1999

## Sister Ida explains significance of jubilee

Dear Friends and Companions in the Lord,

**I**t is with great anticipation and holy excitement that I write to you, dear friends! It seems that in God's eternal plan we have all been chosen to welcome His Son, Jesus the Lord, into our world on this sacred occasion of the Third Millennium.

We know the original story/event very well. We heard it as children and have passed it on to the next generation. There has been and will continue to be, throughout the year 2000, great reminders of the accomplishments and the achievements of humankind. But our invitation is of another nature. It far surpasses the accomplishments of the world and infinitely exceeds its achievements.

We, dear friends, invite you to prepare with us for the "Great Jubilee" of our Lord's birth. Let me tell you of our plans. We want all of our

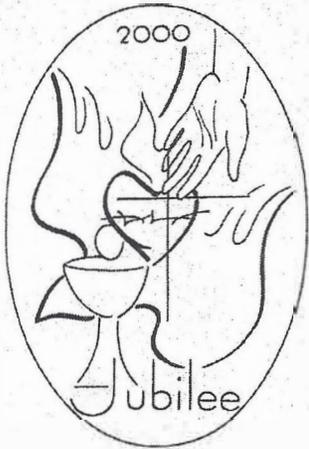
friends, families, co-workers and benefactors to join us at our 11-acre Novitiate property on January 2nd, AD 2000, to recall and bear witness to the goodness and kindness of God, who in His merciful love sent His only Son to win us back to the Father. What a marvelous love! Only God Himself could have thought of such a plan: God, in the Person of His Son, Jesus, would come to redeem His children. Each of you, who have children and have the heart of a parent, knows and savors fully the depth of God's love in sending His only Son to save us and show us the forgiving heart of the Father. This time there must be more than the shepherds in Bethlehem to welcome the Lord. We must come together and join the angels to sing, "Glory to God in the Highest."

We have shared so much with you for many years: marriages, births, baptisms, joys, difficulties, deaths, crises, calm and hope-filled times. Please join us, dear friends, to celebrate the love of Jesus in this time of the Jubilee. We look forward to sharing this day with your entire family: moms and dads, children, parents, grandparents, relatives. This is the time. This is the event. We cannot

See Sister Ida, back page

## Why a newsletter? Why now?

**W**e are publishing this Jubilee Newsletter as a way to spread information about the Great Jubilee and share with you, our friends, the thoughts and plans of our Sacred Heart Sisters for this momentous year, the 2000th anniversary of Jesus' birth. We are happy to start this first issue with Sister Ida's introduction to the second Millennium celebration of the Incarnation and an invitation to our celebration on January 2, 2000. Also in this newsletter you will find Sister Catherine's explanation of "jubilee", and a sharing about the Holy Door. Be sure to mark January 2, 2000 on your calendars and come celebrate with us! Read on to see why it will be so significant!



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# Opportunities to help

*Sister Joanna Strouse, SDSH*

We are so joyful to anticipate this celebration with you! We know that you are aware that providing for the needs of an event such as this requires planning, preparation and help. And so, we invite you to help us host this event. If you think you can help with one of these areas, or are willing to organize a group of volunteers, please call the Sister in charge of that area by **October 15**.

Our needs include the following:

## ♥ GENERAL SETUP

*Sister Joan (818) 842-1050*

Volunteers for set up December 27-29

Volunteers for cleanup January 3-5

Sound systems

Space heaters

Golf carts

## ♥ ENVIRONMENT

*Sister Claire (714) 557-4538*

Potted trees and plants

6-foot tall nativity set

Fabric and ribbon for banners

Volunteers to sew banners

PVC piping for banners

## ♥ HOSPITALITY

*Sister Paula (818) 842-1050*

Food donations for snacks during day

Refrigerated truck for food storage

Paper goods

## ♥ EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION

*Sister Doreen (805) 688-6158*

Walkie talkies and megaphones

## ♥ PROGRAM OF THE DAY

*Sister Joanna (909) 866-5696*

Volunteers for Jan. 2

Lumber and carpentry work

As I am sure you can tell, this is a condensed list of our needs. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and will help our celebration to glorify our Lord. Please know that you are in our daily prayers of gratitude.

Don't forget, above all else, **we want you to be there on January 2!**

## Sister Ida...

From front page

imagine NOT doing something special in welcoming Christ in the year 2000.

We are anticipating 1,000 to 2,000 people to come for this grand and sacred welcome. I will try to give you a very brief insight into the plans of the day.

✓ We will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the opening of the Holy Door, which in our case will be the Holy Door of the Holy Tent. We will have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the day for anyone who desires to meditate in the presence of our Lord and a Marian Shrine for anyone wishing to keep company with Mary on this glorious occasion.

✓ In order to honor our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, we will have a one-mile Eucharistic Procession on the streets of Chatsworth. We will take the Lord to His people, singing songs of praise and gratitude.

✓ There will be spiritual presentations and group sessions for adults, young adults, teens and children to provide food for the soul and to encourage the heart to embrace this Great Year of favors and blessings from God. As in pilgrimages, there will be priests available throughout the day for confessions. Priests will also be available to listen to personal experiences and to help lead all of us in reconciliation with God, the Church and each other.

✓ The day will conclude with the Eucharistic Celebration of the Liturgy at 4:00 p.m. followed by a Songfest with the Sacred Heart Sisters.

It is a glorious moment in time in the sacred history of the world. We anticipate a blessed Jubilee and trust that our Lord already has abundant favors in store for each of you. With the psalmist we are encouraged to: "Look to the Lord for He is good."

With continued prayers  
and love in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

*Sister Ida Peterfy*

## Message from the Pope:

### "Hasten to the feast"

"Every jubilee year is like an invitation to a wedding feast. From the different Churches and ecclesial communities throughout the world, let us all hasten to the feast now being prepared; let us bring with us everything that already unites us and, by fixing our gaze on Christ alone, let us grow in the unity which is the fruit of the Spirit. The present task of the Bishop of Rome, as successor of Peter, is to make the invitation to the jubilee celebration all the more insistent, in order that the 2,000th anniversary of the central mystery of the Christian faith may be experienced as a journey of reconciliation and a sign of true hope for all who look to Christ and to His Church, the sacrament "of intimate union with God and the unity of the entire human race."

excerpt from: *Incarnationis Misterium*,  
Pope John Paul II, Nov. 29, 1998

# A reason for rejoicing!

*Sister Catherine Miller, SDSH*

**T**en or 20 years from now, if somebody asks you, "Do you remember where you were on Dec. 31, 1999 at 11:59 p.m.?" you will likely remember the exact moment and place when you heard the countdown when the whole world burst into shouts of celebration and fireworks, welcoming the birth of a new millennium: 2000 Anno Domini!

As we know, the year 2000 is a significant birthday in the history of "Mother Earth." The media has been cautioning us to "be prepared." Feelings are mixed — excitement with fear. At midnight, January 1, 2000, the clock will strike 12 and for many people, that first moment of the third millennium will burst forth like a radiant comet and then disappear, another moment in the passage of time.

But for us, the People of God, the year 2000 is an anniversary of unmixed joy, a time of rejoicing in the salvation brought to us by Christ's coming. Our joy is so great that we call this a Holy Year of Jubilation — "Jubilee 2000!"

**W**here did the Church's tradition of celebrating Jubilee years start? It goes back to the Old Testament and is rooted in the Sabbath Tradition. God's Chosen People reckoned time differently than the pagans because for them, time had a different meaning. Time began in the Lord and ended in the Lord, so time was not marked by a straight line, but in cycles. Their sacred number was seven because "on the seventh day the Lord rested." Every seventh day was a holy "Sabbath." Every seventh year was a sacred "Sabbatical Year."

And after 49 years ( $7 \times 7$ , which equals the number of fullness), they held a Great Sabbatical in the 50th Year. That year was specially consecrated to God. The Great Sabbatical was a year of universal pardon: slaves were freed, debts were written off, the land was restored to original owners and allowed to rest, and the "black sheep" of the family were recovered and welcomed home, through the front door, with open arms. It was a year when the Family of God was united in His love, in rest, praise and joy!

There is written evidence that these "Great Sabbatical Years" were continued in the tradition of the early Church and were called "Years of Jubilee." Both the Hebrew and the Christian celebrations are celebrations of God's Merciful Love for us,

but with a great difference. The Great Sabbath was celebrated in the hope of the promise of a Savior. In this Year of Jubilee we remember and celebrate the Mystery of Christ's Incarnation when God entered human history, human time, and set us free, and we look forward to the day He will return to take us into our Father's home forever.

**T**he word "Jubilee" itself is significant. It has two possible meanings. It may have come from the word "Jobel" which in Hebrew is the word for the ram's horn which was blown to announce special celebrations. It may come from the Latin word, "Jubilo," which means a "shout of joy." Both meanings express very well our great joy.

The first time that a year of Christian Jubilee was officially called was in 1423 by Pope Boniface VIII. He called for Jubilee Years to be held regularly every 100 years. Soon after, Pope Paul II was encouraged to change the norm to every 25 years because life is so short that most people would never live to celebrate a Jubilee. Since 1450, Jubilee Years have been held, with few exceptions, every 25 years.

**O**ne Jubilee tradition remains unchanged: the opening of the Holy Door. The Holy Door only opens during a Jubilee Year. The connection between the year of the "Great Sabbath" of the Israelites and the Christian "Year of Jubilee" is very clear when we understand the meaning of the Holy Door. The Holy Door symbolizes the Gates of Paradise that were closed behind Adam and Eve and opened by Christ to welcome poor sinners back into their Father's home.

Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, calls the year 2000 the "Great Jubilee," and he has been preparing for it since the beginning of his pontificate. At Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, he will knock on the Holy Door in St. Peter's Basilica. The seal will fall off and the Pope will be the first to enter. At that moment, the Great Year of Mercy, the year of homecoming filled with light and rejoicing will begin! And we will be there in Spirit! Now there is a REASON TO REJOICE!

**"The first time  
that a year of  
Christian Jubilee  
was called  
was in 1423"**

# Opening the Door of our Families to Jesus

The Holy Door was opened for the first time in the Basilica of the Most Holy Savior at the Lateran during the Jubilee of 1423. Each of the four major basilicas in Rome have a holy door: St. Peter, St. John Lateran, Saint Mary Major, and St. Paul Outside the Wall. These beautiful masterpieces have seen very few years of actual use. These holy doors are used only during Jubilee years and then sealed with brick and mortar until the next jubilee.

Before celebrating Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve of this year, Pope John Paul II will knock upon this special door at St. Peter's Basilica three times with a silver hammer, singing "Open unto me the gates of justice." The masonry, which has been loosened beforehand, is made to fall with the third strike of the hammer. After the threshold has been swept clean, the Pope enters first through this Jubilee Holy Door. Each of the doors at the other basilicas in Rome will each be opened by a Cardinal specially chosen.

A door is so much taken for granted; it allows entrance into our home, it welcomes guests, it protects us from harm and shelters us from cold and rain. Doors play a significant part in our lives. In the same way, Jesus says, I am the door." (John 10:9) He plays the most significant role in our lives.

From the Old Testament, the door was very important for the people of God because it was at the mantels of their doors that they sprinkled the blood of the sacrificed lamb so that the angel of death would pass over them. God brought them from slavery in Egypt to freedom. Today, the Jews still have the practice of the "mesusa," the plaque at the door with the words of the Bible. It is a custom of the Jewish people to bless themselves coming and going. They do not pass through that door without thinking of God as being the most significant person in his life. For us, it is important to remember the beginning of our salvation and the celebration of Jesus.

Mary is the "door" also. She opened her whole being to Jesus. And Jesus, the gift of the Father to all humankind, came to us through this door we know as the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Bishops of the United States suggest that your family designate a door in the home to be a "Jubilee door." It doesn't have to be the front door—it could be one of the inner doors of your house, perhaps the kitchen door. This door can be decorated in many ways: with pictures of family members and friends, a list of people you want to remember in your prayers and with artwork to celebrate significant liturgical occasions.

This is a wonderful way for you, parents, to be educators of your children, a God-given opportunity to genuinely talk with them about spiritual things. So many spiritual things could be connected. Don't leave home without saying "God bless you" before you go away. As you come in through that door, leave everything behind, don't bring into your home the "dirt" of every day life. You can talk about how, symbolically, the saints "closed the door". St Francis closed the door to all that would keep him from God's will. He did this so he could have the door of heaven open. Open the door of your heart to Christ alone!

The whole point of the Jubilee year is that we would *remember*. Wonderful things can happen! Forgiveness of debts. Forgive old debts in the family. Forget family feuds, etc. In this year, change the way we talk about each other in the family. We are all one human family. Have less prejudice towards others. Be more kindly in remembering events. Do not guess about how bad people are, rather recall how good they are. "Say the good things people need to hear, things that will really help them." Ephesians 4:29

This jubilee is celebrated for the whole year, December 24, 1999 to Epiphany, January 6, 2001. In the next newsletter we will give ideas on how to decorate your family Holy Door, and a ceremony to use on Christmas Eve to inaugurate it.

— Reference: National Conference of Catholic Bishops materials

For more resource information on the Great Jubilee, visit [www.nccbuscc.org/jubilee/index.htm](http://www.nccbuscc.org/jubilee/index.htm)

## Join the celebration!

Please RSVP by Thanksgiving!

Fill out the form below and mail to

Sacred Heart Novitiate/Jubilee Celebration

10480 Winnetka Ave.

Chatsworth, CA 91311

or e-mail us at [sdshbb@juno.com](mailto:sdshbb@juno.com) and give the information requested below.



Names of Family Members & Friends Attending	Ages of Children/Youth	Address	Phone