

Community of Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal

Winter, 2010

"Love consists in sharing what one has and what one is with those one loves. Love ought to show itself in deeds more than in words." - St. Ignatius Loyola

Dearest Friends,

May the Lord give you His peace!

God greatly longs for us to be united with Him in love and that we put that love into action by tangibly loving one another. God didn't just *say* that He loves us - He *showed* us by what He did. *God so loved the world that He sent His only Son...* Love cannot be limited; it must show itself by its deeds.

In January, two of us will try to put our love in action by being part of a group going on a one-week mission to Haiti. And yet, we don't have to travel far to make our love for God tangible. Consider the words of Mother Teresa who often encouraged us to begin by loving those closest to us - starting at home. I'm sure that we can think of one person in particular who would benefit from our act of kindness at this very moment. Wouldn't it change the world if each of us took this one step today!

In this coming year, may we pray for one another that we might reflect God's love through our selfless giving and forgiving. May this reaching out to one another break down the barriers between us so that God's deepest desire may be fulfilled in us: *that all may be one.*

Joyfully United in Jesus and Mary,

Sr. Lucille
and All Your Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal



The ebb and flow of prayer and work create the rhythm of our life. A daily schedule of common prayer, including the Holy Mass, the Divine Office and Daily Eucharistic Adoration, provide a wellspring from which to draw through the day's work. Sr. Bernadette is pictured cooking for the many patrons of the Father Solanus Kitchen at our East Harlem Convent.

After a year of discernment and formation, our 5 postulants "took the plunge" into the novitiate. Having been invested in the Holy Habit on August 2 and packing up their few belongings, they made the move to the Convent of San Damiano where they will continue to go deeper in the adventure of religious life. Sr. Karol, Sr. Martha, Sr. Bethany, and Sr. Colette are pictured here with Sr. Agnes, their Novice Directress, on "Day One."



To be a Franciscan Sister of the Renewal is to be a daughter of the Church. Our beloved Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI's, visit to England in September will ever be a treasured memory of our Missionary Sisters. (l-r): Sr. Jacinta, Sr. Felicity, Sr. Mary Pieta, Sr. Catherine and Sr. Veronica are pictured here with the young people from the Diocese of Leeds.



When Pope Benedict XVI met the youth of the world in Cologne, Germany, he spoke these memorable words, "Dear young people,

the happiness you are seeking, the happiness you have a right to enjoy has a name and a face: it is Jesus of Nazareth..." Sr. Chiara and Sr. John Paul have found the happiness they sought, or rather, He has found them! On September 18, 2010, they made their first profession of vows.

Along with the blessing of the habit, veil and cincture, each Sister also receives a rosary at her investiture. The rosary reminds each Novice, and indeed each one of us, to place ourselves in the loving, capable hands of Our Lady who leads us to her Son. Could there be a surer way to Christ? To Heaven?



“Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Matthew 25:34-36

Participating in these Gospel works of mercy has brought us many beautiful memories in our first year as missionaries in Leeds, England. Just recently, we have come to know a young man from Sri Lanka in the psychiatric ward of a nearby hospital. Only 19 years old, he ended up in England as a refugee, fleeing the violence of his native land after the death of his parents. He calls us “St. Faustina” because our appearance reminds him of pictures he has seen of this great “Apostle of Mercy.” At the end of our last visit, we ended our prayer together repeating, “Jesus, I trust in you” three times. But the young man from Sri Lanka, who could barely speak English, kept gently repeating that precious and powerful prayer by himself with his eyes closed. Listening to him pray, we experienced the presence of God in His distressing disguise.

Whether on a hospital visit or in our convent, the encounter with Jesus is the same. A few minutes before Holy Hour ended one evening, the doorbell rang. Sr. Jacinta left the chapel to attend to the person at the door. I knew it must be one of our neighbors in need of a warm drink, a friendly smile and a kind word. *“And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.”* As I approached the altar to repose the Blessed Sacrament, an inspiration went through my mind as I thought of Sr. Jacinta serving someone at the door at the same moment. We were both touching Jesus; hidden in His Beloved Poor, and hidden sacramentally in the Holy Eucharist. Yes, we were both “touching Jesus” in the mystery of His revealed Truth. Suddenly the promise Jesus gave us at His Ascension struck me in a whole new and unforgettable way, *“Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of time.”*

Sr. Catherine Mary Holum, CFR



“...an hour is coming, and is already here, when authentic worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Indeed, it is just such worshippers the Father seeks.” John 4:23 This photo captures Sr. Joseph praying the Liturgy of the Hours. It is a privilege to participate in this mystical, life-giving prayer.



Children have a great capacity for prayers, for virtue and for sanctity. The child saints of our Church give eloquent testimony to this. Leading children in Eucharistic Adoration is a regular part of the Upper Room youth group. The Sisters at the Convent of San Damiano have also begun this beautiful work

at St. Francis Xavier Parish in the Bronx. “Let the children come to Me,” Jesus continues to say.



Once the heart is awakened by the love of Christ, the love of neighbor is also stirred within it. Love grows by loving. The “Pater Noster” Food Giveout is a way of making the love of God present to our neighbors by meeting their immediate needs. This Thanksgiving we were able to give out over 175 turkeys and 500 bags of groceries. How blessed we are to be God’s “distributors!” The Sisters are pictured here in front of the “turkey truck” after a joyous day’s work.



Sr. Kelly Francis and Sr. Bernadette enjoy the youth ministry program every bit as much as the children do! Joy is contagious and a sure sign of the Holy Spirit moving among us.

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