



VISION and Challenge

Vol. XIII No. 2

Sisters of Notre Dame • California Province • www.sndca.org
...bringing hope within a diverse society

Winter/Spring 2006

South Korean Teachers Visit Local Notre Dame Schools

Following the SND commitment to international collaboration, four teachers from Bakmun School of Incheon, South Korea, visited Southern California. Ju Tae Won, Joo Young Seok, Han Sang Mook and Sr. Mari Hyoim Kim had many unique opportunities and experiences during their 30-day immersion in American culture and language. Sr. Marie So-Wha Kwak, a former faculty member at Bakmun and current mathematics teacher at La Reina High School, facilitated many aspects of their visit and assisted with translations.

The purpose of their visit was to learn the strengths of the American educational system through observation and discussion. The Korean Education Department has recently changed some educational practices, using methods and techniques used in the United States. Their curriculum and methodology are

being revised in order to facilitate independent learning activities, as opposed to strategies which are primarily teacher-oriented. These changes will help students become the self-directed learners they need to be in a knowledge-based, global society. The Koreans are finding that some of these changes are successful, while others are not.

In visiting the United States, the Bakmun teachers wanted to see the advantages and disadvantages firsthand and to learn how to implement some ideas in their own school. The Korean guests were impressed by the high-level of interaction between American teachers and students, evidenced through the students' participation in class, especially students questioning teachers for greater clarification.

Korean high schools have fewer vacation days, are in session from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays, and on Saturday mornings. Students are not encouraged to ask questions during

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The Korean visitors are engaged in a lively discussion on California's geography with Sr. M. Antonine Manning (second from right).





Uganda Update

This update is a report on the various activities of SND missionaries in Buseesa, Uganda, over the past several months. Questions were posed for these sisters:

- Sr. M. Paulyne Tubick, who completed her service in Buseesa, returning to the United States in December;
- Sr. Antoinette Marie Moon and Sr. M. Colette Theobald, arrived in Buseesa in August.

Photos for this article were provided by Associate Nancy O'Sullivan, athletic director at Notre Dame Academy High School, who visited the mission during the summer.

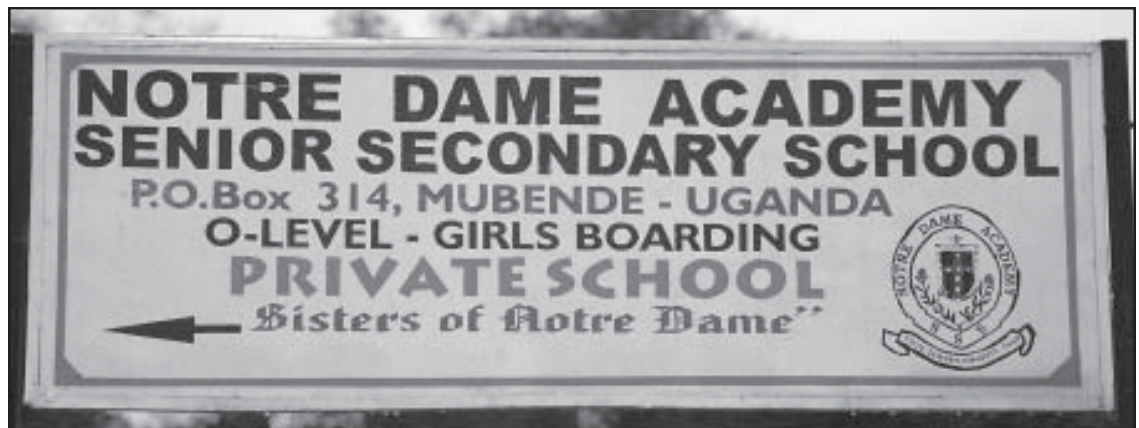
Question: Please tell our readers what you have been doing in Buseesa during the last few months.

Sr. Antoinette Marie: My assignment in the mission is to be the formation director for the aspirants, candidates and the initial months of the postulancy. From my arrival in mid-August through mid-December my daily task was to pray lots, look, listen and learn about the initial formation program already established at St. Julie Formation House. Sr. M. Delrita Glaser is currently and generously serving as interim formation director.

Each day presented me with so much to learn of the culture, language, traditions, customs, prayer rituals, arts, music and food of the people we serve in Buseesa, most especially the young women who are answering God's call to follow Christ as Sisters of Notre Dame in Uganda.

St. Julie Formation House is a separate compound from the main convent of the mission. This ensures that the young women have a place and space to learn, pray and grow in their vocation. We currently have one aspirant, two candidates and a possible four aspirants joining us in March. Life in the Formation House includes daily community and personal prayer, Mass, academic classes and instructions in religious life and spiritual formation. Spiritual direction, time for reflection and retreat are also part of formation. Aspirant and candidates all help keep the daily life of the house running smoothly by cooking, kitchen wash-up, laundry, housecleaning, farm cultivation, etc. There is also free time and community time to recreate at the close of the day... a card game is always fun, or sometimes discussing a good book. [Editor's note: television is not an option in rural Uganda!]

There is so much to learn about the ways, values and mores of Ugandan tribes. The people around us are Bunyoro for the most part, but we are receiving letters from prospective aspirants from many other tribes in Uganda. All of us must learn to live with people different from ourselves and appreciate the call of God to Notre Dame in Uganda. We speak English for formation, as each tribe has its own language and English enables us all to understand each other. The richness of language, music and dance is encouraged and during prayer and liturgy, we



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St. Julie's Primary School students

Question: What have been your responsibilities at the mission?

Sr. M. Paulynne: I taught sixth and seventh grade lessons at St. Julie's, was the supervisor for the maintenance workers, driver and the cooks, handled the payroll for the farm workers and teachers, and was the bursar for both schools. Whew!

Question: What impressed you most about the people (adults and/or children) of the village?

Sr. M. Paulynne: The people are very friendly, hospitable and courteous. They value the person—who you are—not what you do. The present moment is invaluable to the people. Being aware of time and

following rigid schedules are not their priorities.

Sr. Antoinette Marie: What impresses me now is the same that inspired me during my first visit in 2002: the simplicity and genuineness of each person I have met in the mission. Buseesa is deep in the Kibaale District, a rural farming area in western

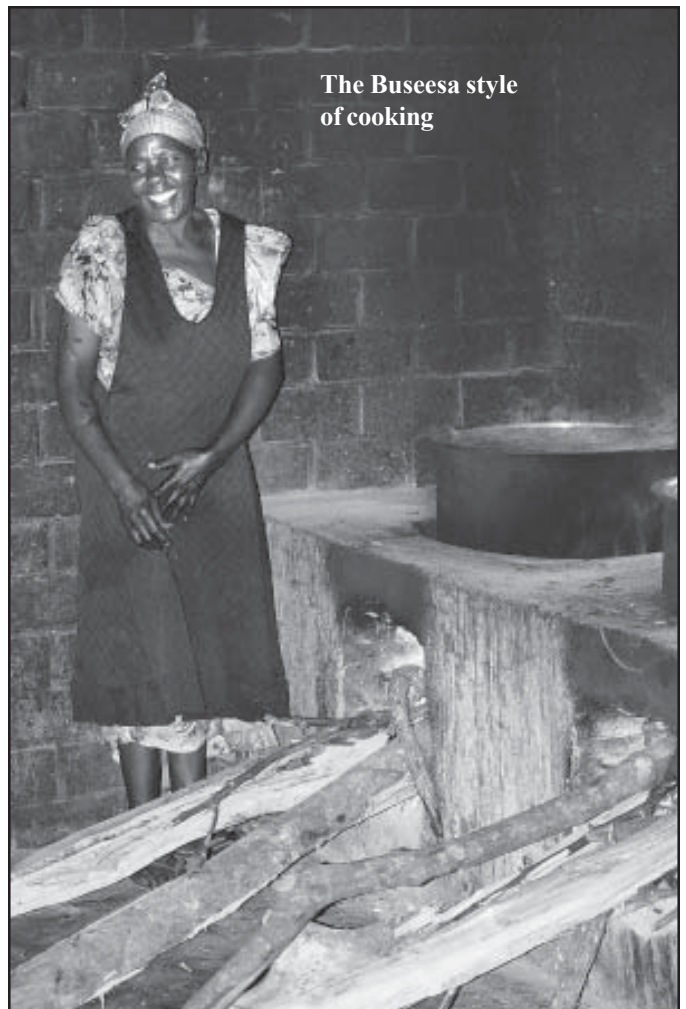
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make an effort to incorporate the unity and the diversity of the tribes.

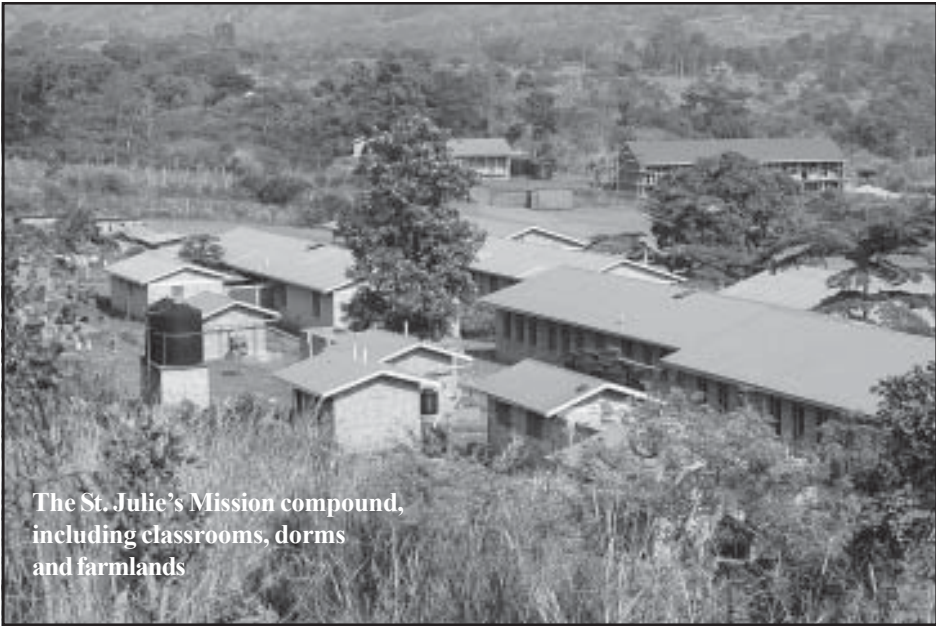
From December through June I will be at our Motherhouse in Rome, Italy, enrolled in the Institute for Spirituality at the University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum). In July, I will go to our East African Novitiate House in Njiro-Arusha, Tanzania, to observe the novitiate formation program (which includes our young Ugandan sisters) and return to Buseesa on August 1. After a time of transition with Sr. M. Delrita, I will assume the work of formation director next January.

Sr. M. Colette: When I arrived on August 15, we had only one week of school before vacation. After a warm welcome program complete with traditional dances, songs, and a lovely blessing, I got reacquainted with the teachers and students. During the three week holiday I became familiar with the school plant and convent. I visited the 11 parishes from which St. Julie School draws its students. The pastors were very welcoming and had positive comments about the school.

When school resumed, my focus was on teacher observations and evaluations. I then took teaching duties for Sr. M. Janet Stamm since she left in October for her home visit. It was really a joy to work with the students who are so very eager to learn! After school I enjoyed tutoring small groups of students in math and English. A big highlight was St. Julie Day. Bishop Deogratias Byabazaire joined us; he is most charming and supportive of the school and the sisters. He calls St. Julie Mission “the jewel of the Hoima diocese.” The Bishop celebrated Mass, then we had a delicious lunch for parents, teachers, students and friends prepared by our cooks. The day ended with a lovely program provided by the students of NDA and St. Julie. The students went home to their parishes (some two hours away by public transport), happy and ready to enjoy their long holiday (from December until February).



The Buseesa style of cooking



The St. Julie's Mission compound, including classrooms, dorms and farmlands

God time. God's action in their lives is constant as is their response. Despite having so little, gratitude to God is most evident.

Question: How has your time in Buseesa changed your perspective of life and your perspectives on education?

Sr. M. Paulynne: Being in Buseesa and living and working with the students, staff, workers and SNDs has given me a greater appreciation for the value of simplicity—living a simple lifestyle. Living in a first-world country, one easily gets caught up and buys into the idea that wants and needs are one and the same. However, the truer and deeper values of faith, family, trust, love, forgiveness, cooperation, and

seeing God's goodness in every person and in creation are the most essential elements that are often buried in the United States but alive and well in Uganda.

The students are eager to be educated and take an active interest in their studies because, deep down, even the smallest child in first grade knows that the key to being released from poverty is through education, which will then give them many options and opportunities for the future.

Sr. Antoinette Marie: First of all, I marvel at what our sisters and benefactors have been able to achieve over the past ten years. This is a joint project and my prayers and praise go out to my sisters and all who offer spiritual, material, emotional and physical support to St. Julie Mission. The mission is a concerted effort and the result is breathtaking. Out of the bush have risen two excellent schools: St. Julie Primary and Notre Dame Academy Senior Secondary School for Girls. The efforts

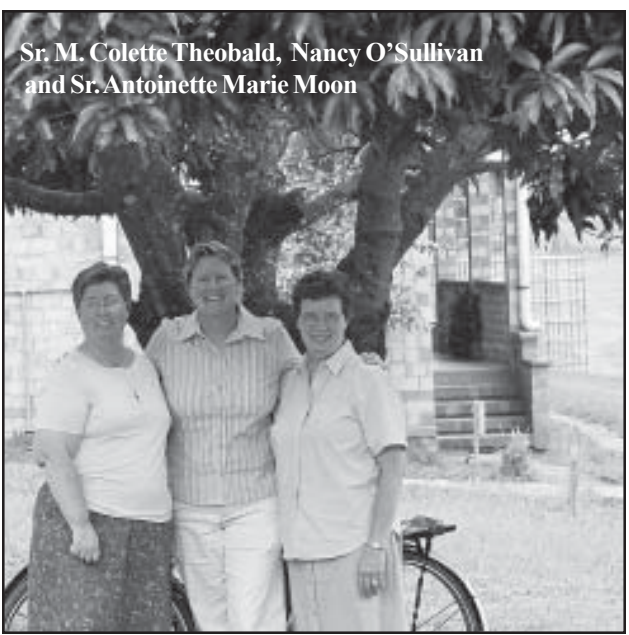
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Uganda Update

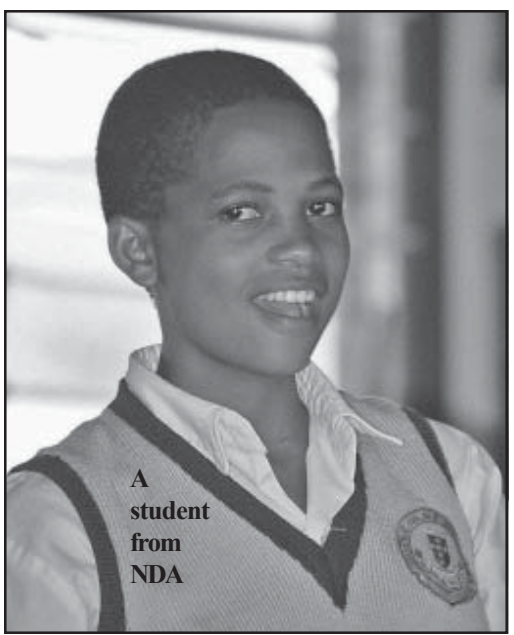
Uganda. Daily life is hard work. If you want to eat, you have to plant the crops and raise the animals, then build the fire and cook, and that takes time. If you want water to drink, you must carry the water from the well or stream, build a fire and boil it, cool it and then purify it. Believe me, water never tasted so good as after all that time and trouble. In Buseesa, people are sincere and they have issues and problems like everyone else on this planet. But they have time for people, for savoring life's moments, for children and for God. The faith of our people is simple and direct.

Sr. M. Colette: I do love the children of the area very much...they are so warm and friendly. The little ones like to hold my hand and the bigger ones ask questions or imitate my English. The school children do want to learn and be successful.

The faith of the people impresses me, too. There is no compartmentalization in their lives of God-time and secular time. No, everything is



Sr. M. Colette Theobald, Nancy O'Sullivan and Sr. Antoinette Marie Moon



A student from NDA

of each of the sisters, the faculty, staff and volunteers insure a quality of instruction and school routine. I have always been proud of the Sisters of Notre Dame and our educational heritage and future. In Uganda, the excellence of the programs is so incredibly evident in the academic achievement and attitude of the students, as well as the sacrifices of their parents to help make the experience possible.

Sr. M. Colette: One thing that is changing me is the value of community. Though I have always loved community, I am struck anew at how important it is to have the support of a loving community. I honestly do not think I could have managed without the wonderful support of the sisters here! Also, I am overwhelmed by the goodness of the people who pray for and support us in our missionary efforts. I do not feel alone!

Question: What has surprised you during your time in Buseesa?

Sr. M. Paulyne: No matter how great the cross, sorrow or loss, the people are very accepting of God’s will. In the very depths of their being, they believe that God is living and moving through their lives. I do not believe that this attitude is a fatalistic acceptance of reality, but rather, faith-filled living.

Sr. Antoinette Marie: Living in a rural area is very new for me. I am still amazed at how much time it takes just to prepare food and water for the day.

Gratitude for everything also amazes me. Our people, and especially the young women in formation, are grateful for all that they receive and experience.

God is a part of daily life in Buseesa, and I find this much different than in the United States.

Sr. M. Colette: When I see my delightful students, I forget how difficult their life is. During a reading period in fifth grade I

asked the students about their fears. The children here are very frightened of rebels coming to take them away, of getting HIV/ AIDS, of parents and relatives dying, of not being able to go to school, and other serious issues. I wonder how they sleep at night with such fears! How can we help these children feel safe? For many Western children, fear of the dark or not doing well in school are their biggest fears. It is a much different world...

Question: From your perspective, what is the greatest need of the people of Uganda?

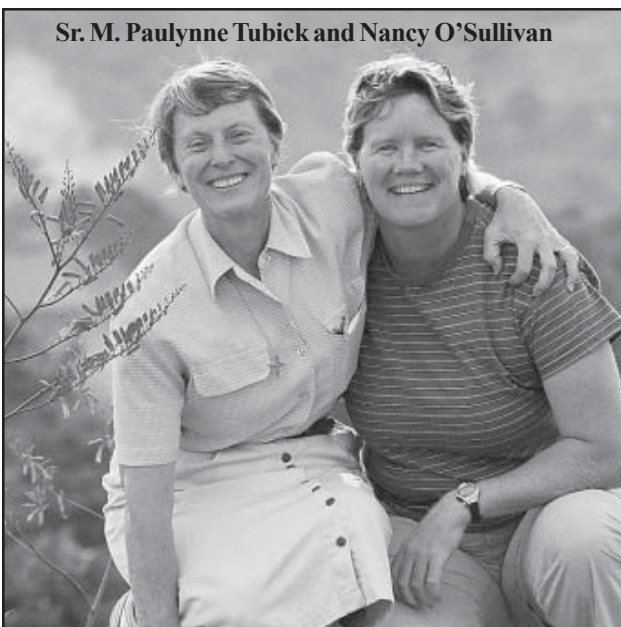
Sr. M. Paulyne: One of the greatest needs in Uganda, especially in the rural areas, is an adequate water supply—water that is safe, clean and hygienic. Most of the people spend half the day fetching water from a well or boar hole that contains disease and parasites. The water is used for cooking, drinking and bathing, plus watering their crops and/or feeding their livestock. The other half of the day is spent harvesting or finding food and then preparing it.

The other great need is medical attention and clinics. Many people die of the flu or malaria because there is no medicine or medical personnel to take care of the health needs of local villagers.

Another need is to empower women and to value children. Most women are viewed as a commodity and are often forced into prostitution in order to support their family. Children are required to work, to carry heavy burdens, and are denied an education. In particular, girls are expected to do many chores such as laundry and cooking; they are often “sold” into marriage so that the family can gain financial stability.

We have much to be grateful for, but we do make a difference if we regard ourselves as being a “pencil in God’s hands.”

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SND Education Conference Planned for 2007

Between December 31 and January 18, ten Sisters of Notre Dame met at the Motherhouse in Rome. Together with the General Council, their task was to begin preliminary preparations and plans for an International Education Conference to be held in Canoas, Brazil, in January, 2007.



Sr. Marie Paul Grech, president of Notre Dame Academy High School, was one of the American representatives to this commission. She reports, "One of the most enriching aspects for me was working with wonderfully committed educators from around the world, women whose work is totally grounded in our educational heritage. It was enlightening to hear how education differs from country to country...with more or less government control and support. The educational system in each country is affected by many realities outside the control of the sisters. Our sisters and collaborators are doing amazing work, in small villages (with few modern conveniences) and in big cities (with state-of-the-art facilities). As we prayed, played and shared together, our passion for education became increasingly evident. Researching aspects of our educational heritage, reading more about the women who have walked before us, searching out proof of the real origin of our educational cornerstones and celebrating the richness we share became highlights for all of us."

The theme for the conference will be "Go...Wrap our World in Hope" which comes from the 2002 Vatican document, Consecrated Persons and Their Mission in the Schools. During the 2004 General Chapter, the recommendation was made to hold such a conference to deepen the SND educational identity in present multicultural realities and to share the special issues and needs of each country. Representatives from the California province will be Sr. Marie Paul Grech, Sr. M. LaReina Kelly and Sr. Anna Maria Vasquez.

*From the beginning of our congregation,
Christian education in its various forms
has been our principal activity.
The sisters entrusted with this ministry
devote themselves to the wholistic education
of those in their care. They integrate
Christian values with all areas of knowledge
to form people able to influence
the Christian transformation of society.
Awareness of world realities,
a sense of social justice
and concern for the environment
are integral to our ministry of education.
Constitutional Directory of the Sisters of Notre Dame*

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Uganda Update

Sr. Antoinette Marie:

I cannot speak for all of Uganda, as the needs of each area are vastly different. Buseesa and the Kibaale District is our mission and the need is for an even greater breath and depth of education. I can hardly wait to hear of our young men and women entering the universities and finally coming back to their own people to give back what they have received. Even more, I await the return of our national sisters, who can speak of God's goodness and love to their own people in their own tribal languages.

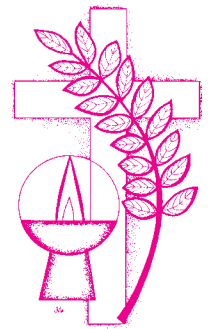
Sr. M. Colette: Political stability is a great need right now. Another need is women's rights. Urban areas are improving, but in the rural areas women's roles are narrowly defined. Unfair pay, refusal by government officials to give women their rights, abuse, and harassment are common. Girls are forced to leave secondary school and sometimes even primary school to marry for financial reasons.



To all of our friends and benefactors who have contributed so much to make this mission a reality, thank you and be assured that we carry you in our hearts and in our prayer each day!

The Sisters of Notre Dame offer their prayers and sympathy to:

- Sr. Mary Dominic Jones and Sr. M. Richardlyn Jones and their family on the loss of their mother, Mrs. Louise Jones.
- Sr. Carol Marie Papet and her family on the loss of her mother, Mrs. Mary Ann Papet.
- the SNDs of the Chardon province on the loss of Sr. M. Leanne Laney. Sr. M. Leanne ministered in California at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Downey during 1961-62 and as the provincial secretary during 1962-63.





Sr. M. Anita Hornack, Sr. Shawn Marie Doyle and Sr. M. Rosaria congratulate Sr. Mari Hyoim after a farewell program presented by the Korean guests.

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International Teacher Exchange

lectures, but remain after school (between 5:00 and 10:00 p.m.) for additional study and tutoring. Teachers rotate the responsibility of staying in the evening to help students.

During their time in Southern California, the teachers observed classes at Notre Dame Academy High School in Los Angeles and La Reina in Thousand Oaks. They found that the high level of cooperation between the laity and religious and the distinctive spirituality of a Catholic school is very similar in both countries. They also found that the American Catholic schools are independent from governmental interference, and that is a real advantage for the administration, staff and students.

In addition to their educational observations, the teachers visited a number of popular sights, including Hollywood, Universal Studios, the Getty Museum, Koreatown, San Francisco, Yosemite, the Grand Canyon and a whale-watching excursion off California's coast. They were amazed by the size of the country and the great wealth and diversity of natural resources.

Sr. M. Antonine Manning provided lessons in English during their stay. She commented, "I was amazed at how much vocabulary and grammar they knew considering it has been 25 or 30 years since they took English. Their specialties are social studies and mathematics, so we studied pronunciation, grammar, reading comprehension and writing. Both during our classes and in more informal settings, they were eager to learn, extremely respectful and most grateful for everything." In their discussions together, they explained more about Korea's life and culture, including the variety of fast-food restaurants also found in the United States and the similarities between traffic congestion in both countries.

Overall, this experience was a practical way for the California SNDs to live the province mission statement of bringing hope within a diversity society. As Sisters of Notre Dame and collaborators on the Pacific Rim, these visits continue to build bridges between the countries and offer insights that are enriching for all concerned.

SNDs Again to Sponsor "Stretch Your Heart"



The Sisters of Notre Dame of the four American provinces are again sponsoring a unique volunteer immersion experience this summer. Single women between the ages of

18 and 40 are invited to participate in a week-long program of outreach, ministering to those in need. Participants will enlarge their vision of Jesus and his mission as they enhance their service skills, experience a supportive community life with the sisters, and reflect prayerfully on the events of each day.

A variety of opportunities and locations are planned:

May 21-26 - Cleveland, Ohio

Assist children and teachers in an inner-city elementary school

May 21-26 - Jacksonville, Florida

Assist in an inner-city school in Jacksonville

July 16-21 - Toledo, Ohio

Assist with migrant ministry

July 23 - 28 - Dayton, Ohio

Offer remedial instruction and Bible classes to children in a rural camp

July 30 - August 4 - Cleveland, Ohio

Work with children in a crisis care facility

August 6 - 11 - Los Angeles, California

Assist with summer Bible Camp for inner-city school children

According to Sr. M. Judeen Julier, this is an important way that young women can experience the SND spirituality, life and mission in action. For further information, contact her at 562-301-7373 or <smjudeen@hotmail.com>. Application and reference forms will be mailed to potential participants and they must be returned two weeks prior to the event. A freewill offering will be accepted to underwrite room and board expenses.

CALIFORNIA GRAPEVINE



- *Sr. M. Justina Jeong* is studying at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago working on a master's degree in theology.
- *Notre Dame Learning Center* is open to children between 2.9 and 5 years of age. Morning and afternoon preschool is available, as well as extended child care. The license number for NDLC is 566210581. For registration information, call 805-494-0304.
- *Sr. M. Paulyne Tubick* has assumed a new ministry as assistant principal at St. Matthias High School in Downey, her alma mater. Associate *Margaret Meland*, St. Matthias principal and also an alum, was grateful that she could join the staff for the second semester.
- From October 12 through 14, SND Associates will meet in Chardon, Ohio for "Celebrating a World of Blessings." This event will be the first such national gathering for Associates. Superior General Sr. M. Sujita Kallapurakkathu will give the keynote address. Associates will also reflect on their common mission and become acquainted with Sisters and Associates from the four American provinces. Since a number of provinces from other countries have not inaugurated an Associate program yet, representatives from these groups will attend as observers.

You are invited to extend SND hope into many hearts. Please remember the "Sisters of Notre Dame of Los Angeles" (our legal title) in your will or estate plan. For further information, call the Development Office at 805-917-3714.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Dear Friends,

I hope you have received your invitations in the mail to join us for our **Spring Fling** on Sunday, May 7 at Notre Dame Center from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. We have moved our spring event back a few weeks so that we can count on better weather. Because our event will now be after Easter, we will not have Easter baskets. You can count on our traditional all-you-can-eat buffet, lovely gift items, a fabulous sweet shoppe, the raffle, meeting your sister friends and a tour of our new Notre Dame Learning Center preschool and the elevator which your generous support helped make a reality.

Benefits from this year's **Spring Fling** will go to our Life and Ministry Fund which assists us in providing uncompensated services for the disadvantaged in the inner city of Los Angeles, in caring for our retired sisters, and in keeping our ministry outreach viable.

I would also like to introduce our new Director of Development, Carmela Burke, who is pictured above working with me on plans for the **Spring Fling**. Carmela has much experience working in the non-profit world and we are delighted to have her on our team at Notre Dame Center. Carmela will be coordinating the **Spring Fling**, so if you have questions about this event, please contact her on weekdays at 805-917-3714.

Thanks so much for your continued support! Wonderful things are happening and it is all because you, our dear friends, are our partners in mission. I hope to see you all on May 7. God bless.

Sincerely,
Sr. M. Kristin Battles, S.N.D.
Provincial Superior

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