

VISION *and Challenge*

Sisters of Notre Dame • California Province

proclaiming God's goodness and provident care

bringing hope within a diverse society

www.sndca.org

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Fall 2008

Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign Grows

This summer, the Sisters of Notre Dame in California began to see the fruits of their work in helping to raise awareness about the problem of human trafficking. The United Nations currently estimates human trafficking to be the fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world and second only to drug trafficking in terms of illicit money.

Over the summer the California province was joined in its commitment to the issue by three other American provinces when they voted to adopt corporate stances against human trafficking. The Sisters of Notre Dame in the Chardon, Ohio, Covington, Kentucky and Toledo, Ohio provinces studied various resources and attended presentations on the topic from various speakers including Kay Buck, Executive Director of the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), and Flor Molina, a survivor and member of the CAST Survivors' Caucus. In Toledo, the corporate stance was developed collaboratively with three other congregations.

A formal corporate stance is not merely a public relations statement but a commitment on the part of the provinces to support efforts and make choices that will help end modern slavery. CAST provides an opportunity for action by including the Sisters of Notre Dame in its advocacy campaign for the renewal of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. The province posted information about the advocacy campaign in the trafficking section of its website and used its trafficking awareness e-newsletter to spread the word.

In August, the province-supported shelter for rescued victims of trafficking was honored by a visit from California's First Lady, Maria Shriver. Shriver and other state officials visited with sisters, survivors of slavery, and staff from CAST.

Later that week, two members of the Survivors' Caucus shared their stories in a packed ballroom at the Border Governors' Conference in Universal City. Shriver moderated a panel discussion about the challenges of fighting human

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Sr. Jan Marie Villalobos (r.) met California's First Lady, Maria Shriver, at the panel Shriver moderated on human trafficking for the Border Governors Conference in August.

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Victims of human trafficking are subjected to force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Victims are young children, teenagers, men and women.

It is not necessary for traffickers to transport their victims across international boundaries. In the United States, traffickers prey on children who are runaways or homeless. They transport their victims to distant cities or states where the children are forced into prostitution and other illicit activities. Trafficking is a federal crime but its very nature makes it difficult to detect.

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From the Provincial...

Dear Friends,

This summer on the way home from a meeting in Denver, Colorado I stopped in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This was my first trip to Santa Fe and I had several hours to take in the sights and history of the area.

One of the amazing places I visited was the Loretto Chapel where the world famous spiral staircase connects the body of the chapel to the choir loft. This spiral staircase was built by a carpenter who appeared out of nowhere in answer to the Sisters' prayers. He built the staircase with no nails, with no central support and with wood not found in the area. Then before the sisters could pay him he mysteriously disappeared. It was quite awe-inspiring to see this masterpiece and to wonder along with all those who have heard the story or visited the chapel—was this an angel or perhaps even St. Joseph?

The second inspiring site was San Miguel Mission, the very first Catholic Church built in the United States in 1610 by Indians from Mexico who had moved into the area along the Santa Fe Trail bringing their Catholic faith with them. Mass has been celebrated in this small church for almost 400 years.

Visiting these two holy places made me reflect on the sanctity of the work of our hands. Each day we have the opportunity to build holy things. Perhaps not edifices or miraculous staircases but the fruit of our labor can build up persons, restore communities, create growth-full environments and make a tremendous difference in our world.

Isn't that what each of us is trying to do every day, build a future full of HOPE for our world? It certainly is the focus of our ministries as Sisters of Notre Dame and we sincerely thank you for partnering with us to make a difference. We hope that each time you receive a copy of Vision and Challenge you see and feel the difference you are making in partnership with us.

Sincerely,

Sister Mary Kristin
Provincial Superior



Donor News

Please remember the Sisters of Notre Dame in your estate plan. Our legal title is "The Sisters of Notre Dame of Los Angeles, Inc." and our IRS non-profit identification number is 95-2005867. For further information, call 805-917-3714 or visit our website at sndca.org.
Thank you and God bless you.

Discernment in Buseesa



Above, three young Ugandan women who are in discernment. Right, Sr. Antoinette with one of the residents of the formation house.



Sr. Antoinette Marie Moon recently made a home visit after three years in Buseesa, Uganda. She has a unique ministry at St. Julie Mission, guiding young Ugandan women who are considering religious life and exploring the possibility of becoming a Sister of Notre Dame. Aspirants, candidates and postulants live together in the formation house, each on her own journey with God, but also as a community of women from different educational backgrounds, tribes and languages.

“I guess what our house should be called is a house of discernment,” said Sr. Antoinette. “You’re weighing, is God calling me, and if he is calling me, to what? Religious life? How do I respond to God and live this new life?”

At the mission, the women in discernment keep a busy schedule that both respects their culture and prepares them for life in an international community. They learn to pray the Liturgy of the Hours but add drums and traditional vocal styles to the daily hymns and prayers. Their daily activities include farming, cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry. Each woman also works as a part-time teacher at St. Julie Primary School in such areas as English, religion, physical education, science, social studies and reading. They also have classes or conferences daily in a variety of areas: prayer, catechism and religious topics, health issues, music, computer literacy, English and Swahili so they can minister effectively in local communities and eventually participate in Notre Dame congregational meetings.

Sr. Antoinette’s experience of living with African women gives her a deep appreciation of their world. She loves witnessing how their innate spirituality combines with their deep connection to the earth and the central role of music in their lives. “I belong to the West and to Notre Dame, and I’ve had international experience by living in Rome, but the African culture is very different; so the inculturation process for me and for them is going on at the same time.”

“It’s not only the impact of cultures, African and Western, which would be enough,” said Sr. Antoinette, “but we are dealing with the [Notre Dame congregational] culture which is international... it’s who we are, what we do, how we live and why. It can take a long time just to get used to it.”

Sr. Antoinette also works to bridge the gap between the interconnected modern world and rural life. She seizes every opportunity to share humankind’s accomplishments and hopes with women who often have limited experience with television or the Internet. For example, to help them learn about space exploration, she made sure they were watching the stars the night when the space station passed over Uganda.

The young women in discernment have shared their strong traditions of hospitality, song, community and group prayer with Sr. Antoinette. Their relationship with God is rooted in togetherness.

“For them, it’s a very personal relationship,” said Sr. Antoinette, “but it’s all the more meaningful when done in community.”

Message from the Development Office



Dear Friends,

This summer, much of our attention focused on the Olympic Games in Beijing. As we watched athletes achieve near-miracle performances, I wondered how I could incorporate the spirit of the Games into our message.

Lo and behold, there was the story filed on NBC by tennis player and broadcaster Mary Carillo about Eric Liddell. Born in 1902 in Tianjin where his Scottish parents were missionaries, Liddell is known as the fastest runner in Scotland and China's first Olympic champion. He represented the UK and competed in the 1924 Olympics in Paris. There, he won the gold medal in the 400-meter race and bronze medal in the 200-meter race. Liddell returned to Northern China where he followed his parents' footsteps as a missionary from 1925 until his death in 1945. According to his biography, one of his responsibilities as a missionary was to teach students in grades 1-12 at an

Anglo-Chinese College so that they would later become influential figures in China and promote Christian values.

What similarities can we draw from this? Columnist George Will said "sports serve society by providing vivid examples of excellence." In ending her report, Carillo said "most athletes come to the games desiring to be great and do great. Eric Liddell came to the Paris Olympics desiring to be good and to do good."

Our SND mission to helping others is shown not only by a presence and ministry in economically deprived areas in this country and in remote villages around the world, but also by the education of young people who can learn to bring about a world of peace, justice and respect. We pray you continue to team up with us as we strive for excellence in doing good and keep pace with ever-changing needs in bringing hope to our sisters and brothers who struggle for life and dignity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Carmela Burke".

Carmela Burke
Director of Development

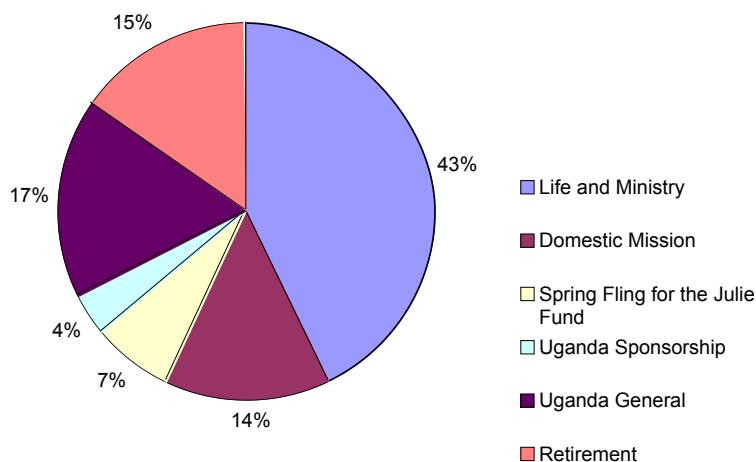
By the way, do you happen to have the following items? If you don't need them and would like to donate them to us, we can surely use these items for our annual Spring fundraiser:

- Teacups and saucers
- Teapots
- Dessert plates
- Gift certificates
- Gourmet Gift baskets

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July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

Total: \$390,645



This pie chart is based on figures available as of August 31, 2008. A formal audit will be conducted and results made available in Winter 2009.

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The Sisters of Notre Dame are grateful to our many friends who have made financial donations to the congregation between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, including those who wish to remain anonymous. We also wish to thank our friends and family who made in-kind donations.

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National and International SND Ministries Visit California

This July, Sisters of Notre Dame in California attended presentations at Notre Dame Center about ministries of the congregation on the national and international level. Srs. Patricia Mary Garrahan and Mary Donna Paluf gave a presentation on the new sponsorship structure for Notre Dame schools and shared the first steps of their work at the new SND National Education Office.

The sponsorship structure is rooted in the reforms of Vatican II and gives more voice to the laity in the church. At the same time, however, the Sisters of Notre Dame maintain fidelity to their charism and canon law by offering spiritual and practical support through the Board of Members, which appoints the Boards of Trustees and sponsors formation activities, and the National Education Office, which provides its expertise in governance and facilitates collaboration and retreat experiences.

The National Education Office formed in January of 2008 when the Notre Dame Education Association dissolved. This new national ministry is currently building a resource website, creating membership services, and developing an affiliated school program.

On the international level, Sr. Carol Brandt shared details of her work at the United Nations. The congregation is in the process of establishing an NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) which will work to influence international policy on behalf of the poor. Sr. Carol has already seen instances where the voice of religious congregations have an impact on decision making. "Officials respect us because they know we have no agenda other than helping the people we serve, the poor and disenfranchised," she said.

Sr. Carol and Sr. Mary Jo Toll serve on several NGO committees including the Commission on the Status of Women, Working Group on Girls, Sub-Committee for the Eradication of Poverty of the Social Development Committee, Financing for Development, Committee on Migration, Committee on HIV-AIDS, Committee on Trafficking. They partner with many other NGOs including forty other religious congregations.

Srs. Carol and Mary Jo are able to make a difference by providing direct input from Sisters of Notre Dame working in various countries. Their role as NGO representatives includes visiting officials from member states, writing letters, providing oral testimony, and gathering information needed by the committees for their work.

Maintaining an NGO office is an investment by the congregation to amplify its mission of "proclaiming God's goodness and provident care" by providing a voice for the poor and disenfranchised to people who have the power to help eradicate poverty and protect human rights. The sisters in California were particularly interested to hear about the work of NGOs at the UN to end human trafficking (see related cover story).



Top: (l. to r.) During a break between presentations, Srs. M. Donna Paluf, Jolisa Lazaro, Rebekah Kennedy and Patricia Mary Garrahan look over educational materials from the United Nations. Bottom: Srs. Carol (second from left) and Joan (far right) met with CAST to discuss the agency's efforts to advocate and care for victims of human trafficking.

Historic Education Retreat

On Saturday, August 16, the trustees of the board for La Reina High School and the newly combined board of trustees for Notre Dame Academy Elementary and High School gathered for a historic retreat. They were joined by Nancy Coonis, President of Notre Dame Academy; Sr. M. LaReina Kelly, President of La Reina High School; Srs. M. Kristin Battles, Judeen Julier and Kathleen Burns from the Board of Members; and Sr. Patricia Mary Garrahan, Director of the SND National Education Office.

“This is the first time all the trustees gathered together with the Board of Members,” said Sr. Kathleen. “We wanted the first session to have a retreat atmosphere so that there would be time to reflect on the mission of Jesus as the foundation of what we’re doing in our schools.”

Sr. Kathleen reflected with the trustees on Jesus’ image of the kingdom as fullness of life intended to be experienced as a present reality, but which would find its fulfillment only in heaven. Thus, the impetus of Jesus’ healing ministry was to lead people to more abundant life. Using the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son, Sr. Kathleen also focused on Jesus’ desire to see his Father’s kingdom experienced and celebrated in community. “Consistent with Jesus’ image of the kingdom is his desire that each person come to understand his or her identity as beloved by the Father, and the Father’s plan that each person experience that love in community.”

As part of the retreat experience, the trustees were given personal time to reflect and then return to the large group for sharing. After lunch, the trustees of each school worked separately with Sr. Pat on goal setting for their individual boards.

“I had a great sense of pride in seeing these men and women assume their leadership role in the spirit of the Sisters of Notre Dame,” said Sr. LaReina. “No matter which school was represented by the trustees, there was a general sense that all were using their gifts and talents in the service of the ministry of Catholic education. Seeing this gave me, once again, a renewed sense of hope for the future.”

Welcome, New Associates of Notre Dame...



On Sunday, June 22, the Sisters of Notre Dame in California welcomed five new Associates. (Clockwise from top right) Kevin McNamara, Teri Bond, Marti Ruble, Jacqueline Marquez and Nancy Coonis, made their covenants during a morning liturgy which was followed by a luncheon. For more information about the Associates Program, contact Sr. Lisa Megaffin at 805-402-8623 or megaffin@earthlink.net.

Celebrating “Yes” to God’s Provident Care:



Nearly 500 people joined the Sisters of Notre Dame at St. Paschal Baylon Church in Thousand Oaks on Saturday, July 12 to celebrate the love, commitment and fidelity of eight women who have dedicated themselves to Jesus through Mary. Renowned composer and music director Christopher Walker led a choir of Sisters of Notre Dame, Associates of Notre Dame and the Caritas Chorus of St. Paul the Apostle Church in Westwood. Celebrant Rev. Peter Albano, C.M. was joined by homilist Peter Gelfer, O.H., Deacon Thomas Sabol and other local priests.

Sr. Cristina’s final profession of vows was a moving ceremony that included answering an examination, proclaiming her final vows, signing her vows at the altar, receiving a solemn blessing and accepting a ring engraved with the words “Tout à Jésus par Marie” (All for Jesus through Mary). She was presented to the congregation to great applause.

Then each of the seven Jubilarian sisters faced the altar and renewed her vows, the ‘Yes’ given to God’s everlasting love. Over the years, their vocations have included adoration ministry, bereavement ministry, cooking for the province center, nursing and praying with the sick. Several have also served as principals, school administrators and teachers of every subject from reading to computer science. Together, these women represent 390 years of service to the Lord and the Church.

This page, from top left: Sr. Florette Marie leads the entrance procession; Christopher Walker directs the choir; and a view of the church filled with friends and family.

Next page, from top right: the Golden Jubilarians during the liturgy; Sr. Mary Ann renews her vows; Sr. Cristina Marie; (l to r) Srs. M. Francelia, Donnamay and Josanne.



2008 Jubilee and Final Profession



*Jubilee of Grace
70 Years*

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60 Years*

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Final Profession

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Corrections

Please accept our apology if we have omitted a donor's name or made a spelling error. Kindly notify the Development Office at 805-917-3714 and/or carmela@sndca.org. We will make the correction in a future issue. Thank you!

Freedom For Everyone Pledge

- I promise to learn what I can about human trafficking, to share my knowledge with my family, friends, church, community, and co-workers, and to keep hotline information handy.
- I promise to make choices that encourage fair trade and honor the dignity of each person.
- I promise to share my time, talent or treasure to help organizations that serve trafficking victims, build community awareness or advocate for human rights.

For suggestions on how to live this pledge, visit sndca.org/trafficking

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trafficking. Other members of the panel included actress and U.N. Human Rights Ambassador Julia Ormond, San Diego District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis, and First Lady of Sonora Lourdes Laborín. Srs. M. Kristin Battles, Judeen Julier, and Jan Marie Villalobos attended the breakfast discussion along with CAST staffers, members of the Southern California Partnership for Global Justice and other organizations engaged in the fight to end human trafficking.

Shriver encouraged officials and the public to do whatever they could. "Every day citizens can make a huge impact by simply looking below the surface at the person in the restaurant who might be there seven days a week, the person next door who might be a housekeeper who never seems to get a day off." Her office has posted a brochure with ten ways people can help end human trafficking on her website, MariaShriver.com.

All the panelists agreed that awareness plays a large part in helping find trafficked people and prevent situations like the dire poverty that make people vulnerable to traffickers. Ormond encouraged all consumers to be aware of the reality of slavery in the supply chain of many common items, including clothing and mobile phones. In addition to expressing opposition to the corporations involved, she encouraged purchasing fair trade items and inviting businesses to join the struggle to end slavery.

A month later, the province joined the Los Angeles Metro Task Force on Human Trafficking

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Sr. Naina Brings God's Healing Love to the Poor in India



Every two years, Sr. Mary Naina travels from Bangalore, India to California to participate in an international health symposium in Buena Park. It's an unusual place to find a school principal, but Sr. Naina's role at the Notre Dame Sophia Opportunity School is anything but usual. The school aims to help every intellectually challenged child reach his or her maximum potential to be a contributing member of society.

As principal, Sr. Naina continuously seeks the best therapeutic and educational practices to serve the students. During a training session in Texas on cognitive and play therapies, she learned that many children with learning disabilities also have allergies. Back in India, she found that traditional medical techniques were too challenging for her students due to the pricking necessary for allergy testing. Sr. Rose Marie Tulacz helped her research alternative treatments.

Sr. Naina supplemented her training as a clinical psychologist with a special technique called NAET (Nambudripad's Allergy Elimination Technique). She used this non-invasive, non-pharmaceutical healing practice at the school and found that the children were very responsive. "Children with autism started coming out of their little world," she said. "Hyperactive children were able to focus."

Children with mental retardation were also helped by the treatments and became more independent. Sr. Naina opened a clinic at the school and the success of the rehabilitation program grew. In 2006, Sophia Opportunity School students with diverse disabilities visited then-President of India, A.P.J. Kalam in New Delhi as part of their educational tour.

Back in Bangalore, Sr. Naina expanded her healing ministry. She began to volunteer at an orphanage nearby where she treated children with HIV and AIDS using NAET practices. The treatments have strengthened the children's immune systems and drastically reduced the occurrences of skin infections and tuberculosis at the orphanage. The death rate at the orphanage has dropped from two children a week to a rare event. "Working with children who have HIV is very rewarding because they would have died," said Sr. Naina. "Now they are living, going to school, enjoying life."

In the coming months, Sr. Naina will open a clinic in Bangalore where she will provide treatment for people who have been made poor and suffer from a range of illnesses from allergies to

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at Plaza del Pueblo in Los Angeles for an educational fair. The fair included a panel of speakers from government and nonprofit agencies engaged in the fight to rescue and restore victims of human trafficking. The Freedom for Everyone pledge drive kicked off as part of the education fair activities. The pledge offers people three tangible things they can do to help victims of human trafficking with suggestions for educating others, preventing situations that make people vulnerable to trafficking, and providing support for victims.

To learn more about human trafficking and how you can help end it visit sndca.org/trafficking

Human Trafficking Resources

Hotlines

Southern California: 1-800-655-4095

National: 1-888-3737-888

Websites

U.S. Bishops' Statement on Human Trafficking

<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/traffickingstatement.pdf>

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST)

<http://castla.org>

Free the Slaves

<http://www.freetheslaves.net>

kNOw Human Trafficking

<http://knowhumantrafficking.org>

Rescue and Restore Campaign

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/index.html>

“God Provides” is the motto I live with!

My name is Sr. Mary Prabha Jesudhason. I came to Thousand Oaks, California from India on December 23, 2006 to attain a Master’s degree in Special Education in order to be the Director of Special Education in our Sophia Opportunity School in Bangalore, India. Though India’s education system is different from that of the United States, I will try to apply my knowledge in whatever creative ways I can. For example, lack of technology, teaching materials, and other resources can handicap our teachers. I am well aware that students with special needs require special things to function appropriately. I surrender this very need into the hands of God that our school with children who are underprivileged--financially, emotionally, socially, and physically--will be provided with all that they need through generous people.

A theologian stated about our concern about the future: it will be the same as the present. In other words, in my perspective, God will take care of me and my ministry as He did in the past and does in the present. I have served in two rural mission stations where though I lacked electricity, means of communication and travel, I did not find that I was missing something. In fact, I was happier when I lived with less and loved the poor more. In addition, the poor people taught me to be more cheerful, to trust God, to love, and to have the minimum and yet share.

I taught in one of our elementary schools in Jharkhand, Ranchi for three years and then in a middle school. Then I was in charge of our boarding school in Balumath, Ranchi. The people I served in these two places were the same. At least sixty percent were not Christians or did not have a formal religion. The students were from very poor families, had the minimum or nothing to live on--in fact some had only one set of clothes. When in school, they received three meals a day; at home, they had one meal or none. People in Ranchi are dying of starvation and many of our students have lost one or both parents. As Sisters of Notre Dame in India, we are unable to provide for their material needs due to a lack of financial resources.

When I came to the United States, I could not think of the luxury most of the students and people in general enjoy here. I cannot think of wasting money, food, clothes, when I think of the suffering humanity around the world, especially the people I served.

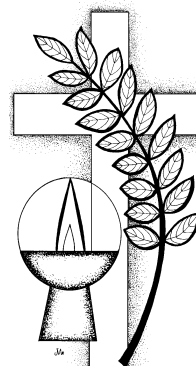
I continue to pray that God may give me the grace to love Him more deeply, live more simply and serve Him more ardently. “God Provides” is the motto I live with and it is true. God usually provides through others. May all people be aware of the needs of others and be more generous to reach out to others. Let us be thankful for what we are and have, and look for opportunities to hold hands with the needy. God Bless.



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asthma and arthritis. She will also continue her work at the orphanage, where she is currently conducting a controlled study on how NAET treatments help children with HIV thrive. Sr. Prabha Jesudhason will become principal of Sophia Opportunity School. (see related article above).

“My service as a sister is with a preferential option for the poor,” said Sr. Naina. “I consider the mentally retarded as the most poor. I enjoy doing service with them and the children with HIV, to find the goodness of God in very individual and see the wholeness in each person.”



The Sisters of Notre Dame offer their prayers and sympathy to Sr. Rose Marie Tulacz and her family on the death of her mother, Dorothy Tulacz.

California Grapevine

☛ Thursday, August 7 found a rather unique team facilitating a retreat for the faculty of St. Matthias Elementary School, one of the first two schools founded by Sisters of Notre Dame in California. The team included Sr. Lisa Megaffin and Associates Nancy Coonis, Pickens Halt and Lucy Shiffrin. Vanessa Rivas, the school's principal, requested the Notre Dame presence. Many of the faculty found the day's reflections especially meaningful due to their own Notre Dame connections.

☛ Vocations Director Sr. Valerie Marie Roxburgh and Director of Communications Lisa Helene Donovan joined their counterparts from other Notre Dame provinces in Cincinnati, Ohio in September for a conference on communicators and women religious.

☛ Parishoners from St. Julie Parish in Newbury Park shared reflections about their visit to St. Julie Mission in Buseesa, Uganda, with Sisters and Associates of Notre Dame in September.

☛ Sr. M. Ruthilde left the California Province after six months of intensive English study. She will stop briefly in her homeland of Germany before traveling to Busessa, Uganda where she will assist at St. Julie Mission.

☛ Sr. M. Kristin Battles traveled to Toledo, Ohio in October for the congregation's General Conference. This meeting between provincials and the congregation's leadership team will help set the agenda for the upcoming General Chapter.



Sr. M. Rosaria Park celebrated becoming a citizen of the United States in August with Sr. Kathleen Burns and other sisters living at Notre Dame Center. She was one of 6,000 other new citizens who were naturalized and welcomed in a ceremony at the Los Angeles Convention Center.



Sr. M. Rebekah Kennedy participated in the Disneyland Half-Marathon in August.

 **Sisters of Notre Dame**
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