

Did You Know?

Last years' NDA team contributed 29,000 hours of service, and they tutored over 400 students and over 300 adults.

50% of students at Apopka Middle School are from families who are living below the national poverty level.

"Holes bored from opposite sides rarely meet."

a Samoan proverb

What we choose, changes us.

What we love, transforms us.

How we create, remakes us.

Where we live, reshapes us.

Jan Richardson

A message about and from Sister Cathy



Gracias for everything!

On September 21, 2006 Sister Cathy Gorman, SND, suffered major injuries resulting from an automobile accident in Apopka. Sister Cathy spent two weeks in Orlando Regional Medical Center's trauma unit before being moved to a healthcare facility for extensive rehabilitation (call 407.886.5151 for information). Cathy suffered three broken ribs, two broken knee caps, ankles, a broken foot and heal bones, and a broken right arm and wrist.

Everyday gets a little better, but the recovery is a long and difficult one, although you would not know it from being with Cathy whose faith in God, strength of character and determination pushes away discouragement and welcomes another lesson in patience and humility. God could not ask for a better servant.

For those of you who are blessed to know Sister Cathy, you are fully aware of her great sense of humor. When I asked Cathy if she would like me to include a "Message from Cathy" section in the newsletter, with a smile that stretched across her whole face she responded, "These bones, these bones, these dry dry bones." We laughed and felt good that God blesses her body with a great

healing ability. It is unusual for someone who has lived with diabetes almost her entire life to heal so beautifully. Knowing Cathy why would that surprise anyone?

Cathy wants everyone to know how much she appreciates the prayers, calls, cards (over one hundred already) visits and good food. After humorously commenting that institutional cooking is no comfort food, the next morning Sister Ann was busy making one of her famous soups, and Teresa brought over Cathy's favorite Sunday meal prepared with Teresa's loving hands and heart. Gail decorated Cathy's room and everyone felt better.

(from the editor with love)



Little artists are part of big picture at Crealde

Eleven children, aged 5-8, attended a one week intensive art camp at the Crealde School of Art in Winter Park where they had the opportunity to explore the mediums of plaster, clay, and paint under the guidance of gifted teachers at the school. Scholarship dollars from Crealde made this wonderful experience possible.

The kids chatted excitedly as they were driven to Winter Park each day, looking forward to working on their projects. When the week ended the 'artists' contributed some of their works to a show that was held at the school in August.



According to these young artists
"Picasso started like this!"

Kids get out of the heat and stay “cool”



Susie Lozano holds on tight to Jackie Zamora

Summer, 2006! It might have been hot and steamy outside, but inside things were sooo cool! Just ask the 35 kids who came to Kid Camp for two weeks. You will hear about all the “cool stuff” they did from puzzles to painting, dancing, art, and sports. Americorps volunteers Nilka Melendez and Shelia Zahn planned and supervised activities for the campers from the local middle and high schools.

The first week of camp was held at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, where the

highlight of the session was an every morning art class taught by Linnie Ashworth, and assisted by Sarah Downs. The children made plaster masks and life-sized self portraits. Ms. Ashworth was so impressed by the kids’ attitudes that she is currently teaching a Monday-after-tutoring art class for the kids.

Week Two of camp was held at St. Francis Church. Thanks to a generous donation, from a Board member of The Hope Community Center, all campers were able to go to Wonder Works in Orlando for

an afternoon of fun and games. Plans for summer 2007 are under way!



Eric Escareno likes to pitch!

*“We are because
We are seen; we
are because we
are loved”
From Rilke’s
Book of Hours*

Vasquez Sisters give back to Community

At OFFM, we say, “It’s all about relationships”. Our successes have been the direct result of the relationships we have built with our community participants, partners, and our volunteers. Many can attest to the fact that once in “the fold”, the relationships keep people connected for years, sometimes for generations. And consequently, sometimes people who come for help or to participate have a chance to grow, make positive choices in their lives and then get a chance to give back.

Such is the case of sisters Olivia and Maribel Vasquez. The sisters followed

their older brothers Miguel and Rogelio into the OFFM youth groups when they were in middle school. Maribel said, “It brought new things into my life. I always knew who I could come to for help.” From youth groups to family nurturing classes, the entire family became connected to OFFM. “It was a tremendous help,” said Olivia. “Our parents got help and it helped us brothers and sisters to communicate better. We found out the real meaning of communication in those classes.”

And, now for the best part. Both sisters have graduated from high school. Olivia is a stu-

dent at Seminole Community College and works part time as an administrative assistant at the Ministry office. Maribel recently became a member of the Notre Dame Americorps (NDA) team in Apopka. She serves at Dream Lake Elementary School and the after-school program called Kids in Motion. She reflected on her decision. “I was always a positive person. I knew I wanted to have a chance to be connected to something positive -to have people look up to me. As a senior, I decided I was not ready for college. NDA allowed me to stay connected to education. I love working with kids and helping people.”



Sisters Olivia and Maribel Vasquez happy to be at OFFM

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DRIVE

Please consider helping OFFM reach its goal of entering its new facility, The Hope Community Center, debt free. We have eight months to go and \$800,000 to raise. The project costs are now just under \$1.9 million. To learn more about the project and OFFM go to our website, or come by our storefront rental office at 815 South Park Avenue in Apopka. We will be happy to introduce you to our staff and programs. You can help by committing to an enclosed pledge card or by sending as little as \$25.00 every time you get a newsletter. Soon we hope to offer payment by credit card. Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Opus Foundation awards \$100,000 to OFFM



On September 19, Sister Ann received a call from Joe Rauenhorst of the Opus Prize Foundation. Ann had no idea what was about to happen. When Rauenhorst said the foundation was going to award OFFM, she thought, "another recognition

plaque." He continued, "The Office for Farmworker Ministry is one of three finalists and will receive \$100,000 from The Opus Prize Foundation."

The Opus Prize will be awarded to OFFM on November 8, at a special ceremony at the University of Notre Dame. Sister Cathy Gorman, Gail Grimes, and Ann Kendrick of OFFM and Sister Teresa McElwee of the Justice and Peace Office will be recognized for thirty-five years of dedication and effort to combat poverty, illiteracy,

hunger, disease and injustice in the Central Florida farmworker community. The \$100,000 will help to cover increasing costs for the many programs offered by OFFM. The majority of the ministry's money come from grants and private donations which fluctuate yearly and, of late, are dwindling. This award will help OFFM be able to continue this important work.



Sister Ann Kendrick, Cathy Gorman and Gail Grimes

The Opus Prize is affiliated with the Opus Group, a \$1.4 billion national real estate development company, who gives annually to honor a person with entrepreneurial spirit and abiding faith.

CommUnity invites Opus to our table

Heriberto, Isabel and Abigail Guzman were one of the first families to arrive at a community dinner held at OFFM on June 29, 2006 to welcome the Opus Foundation. The Opus group visited for three days learning and

seeing for themselves what OFFM does for the community and what the community does for OFFM. The Guzman family represented the stories of appreciation of the many families who came. Both Heriberto and Isabel spoke of their involvement in the youth groups and as volunteers in Notre Dame Americorps for two years. Isabel thanked OFFM for teaching her to dream and for supporting her dream to become a nurse. Isabel just graduated from LPN school and will go on for her RN. Heriberto gives credit to the ministry for inspiring him to be a good man and a good husband and for keeping him on the right path when it would have been so easy to go astray. This is only one story of struggle and accomplishment that brought tears to the more than forty attending.



We knew that night, whether we received funds from Opus or not, everyone had benefited by this visit and gathering. We listened to each others' stories and we drew closer to those we knew and to those we did not know. We all continued building CommUnity and hope.

"The success of our community lies in the hands of all of us and that is where it needs to be."

-Sr. Cathy Gorman

125 attend groundbreaking event June 23



Our dream is truly on the move. Join us in 2007 for our Grand Opening!



OFFICE FOR FARMWORKER MINISTRY

815 South Park Avenue
Apopka, Florida 32703
Phone 407.886.5151
Fax 407.884.6644
Website www.offm.org

OUR MISSION

To strengthen farmworker and low-income families through faith, advocacy, education and economic development

Upcoming Events To Remember

November 8, 2006 OFFM Receives Opus Award at University of Notre Dame
Thanksgiving Letter November 16, 2006
Toy Shop December 20, 2006
Annual Dinner Dance January 13, 2007
La Loteria March 18, 2007

We're on the web!

September 6 is "Notre Dame Americorps Day" in Apopka



City Commission and NDA Team

On September 6, 2006 Mayor John Land and the Apopka City Commission officially welcomed the new NDA team to Apopka. Designating the day "Notre Dame Americorps Day in Apopka", Mayor Land presented the group with an official proclamation and thanked them in advance for the service they will deliver to the citizens of Apopka.

Members range in age from nine-



Maritza Allen is helped by Josh McBride and Paul Crowley in team building exercise

teen to sixty something and hail from such places as Wisconsin, Maine, the Dominican Republic, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, Massachusetts, Illinois, Colombia, South America, North Carolina, Virginia, Mexico and the local Florida group from Tampa, Maitland, Winter Garden and Apopka.



The new NDA group is exceptional-bright, ambitious, committed and passionate about doing service



Sarah Downs helps students learn English

