

# in Ministry Today

*seek truth • make peace • reverence life*

WINTER 2009

## Answering the Call

**When Katrina hit the Gulf States** three years ago, many areas of New Orleans, the lower 9th Ward and St. Bernard Parish (County) were devastated. As with the rest of the country, the Adrian Dominican Sisters watched, prayed, and wondered how we could help. Shortly after, the Archbishop of New Orleans and the Dominican schools called for help to assist the people in rebuilding their lives. The pastoral needs of the archdiocese were great and the resources were few. The schools were flooded and damaged and work needed to be done.

With the help of the Ministry Trust Fund, the General Council of the Adrian Dominican Sisters began a collaborative effort with the archbishop and the Dominican schools in New Orleans to respond to the seemingly overwhelming needs of citizens still traumatized from the natural disaster.

A first wave of Adrian Dominican Sisters and Associates volunteered for a short term commitment of two to three months. During that time, it became evident that a more permanent commitment was needed. Encouraged by the Administration of the Adrian Dominican Community, the outreach ministry in New Orleans took shape. Following are highlights of the effort.

## Responding to the Needs in New Orleans:

### A wave of volunteers ...

At first, sister volunteers committed themselves to two to three months of service: assisting parishes and schools and basically walking the streets and knocking on doors. These house-to-house visits, even to abandoned houses, were an important first step in letting people know about services available to them, providing information about the Church, listening, and entering into a compassionate conversation. Where there was no one at home, the sisters left information at the door. This valuable canvas of the area provided direction for further activity.

Sisters also assisted with physical therapy in a retirement center; worked with a local organization that helps developmentally challenged adults; and joined a local self-help organization that works to restore neighborhoods.

St. Mary's Dominican High School library was flooded. Sister volunteers organized the replacement books and materials.



**Sister Carol Louse Hiller, OP, catalogues books donated by the Laura Bush Foundation.**



**(Above) Sister Ellen Schmitz, OP, visits house-to-house.**



**(Right) Sisters Kitty Bethea, OP, and Patty Harvat, OP, are involved with outreach in the Hispanic community.**



**Sister Diane Odette, OP, (far right) assists with religious education and other programs.**

## Leave a Legacy

In these dire days people are very careful about their financial viability, and yet, from the beginning of time, there has been a common yearning to say, "My life was important ... I made a difference."

Everyone wants to lead a fruitful life, have a successful career, earn the respect of others. Many have been hit hard by these times, through no fault of their own. But most people, given the opportunity, would like to feel that they have made a contribution toward a better world; that their lives have touched others – perhaps for many generations. The one we help today may provide assistance in the future.

That small gift of immortality – the quiet satisfaction of helping perpetuate something meaningful – is the rich reward enjoyed by our many friends who have made planned gifts. You want to know that your planned gift will affect the future by purposeful contributions to trustworthy causes. These gifts, made during life or through the donor's estate, have strengthened the Adrian Dominican Sisters' ability to provide for present needs, future ministries, care for our retired sisters, and carry out our Vision.

We invite you to explore with us the ways you can leave your mark on the future. In your estate planned giving, for instance, a will, insurance policy, retirement fund, etc. you can reach out to others and shape tomorrow, and assure yourself a place among those who can truly say, "I was here; my life was important ... I made a difference."

For more information, contact Sister Janet M. Hudspeth, OP, in the Development Office at 586-776-4685 or e-mail her at DevOffAD@aol.com.

## A permanent commitment

Today, after only three years, four Adrian Dominican Sisters have formed a Dominican community in New Orleans, ministering to Catholic parishes, a Dominican school and Hispanic



**Sister Patricia Harvat, OP, (center) serves as director of Mission Effectiveness at St. Mary's Dominican High School. These four girls attended the Dominican High School Preaching Conference in Adrian.**

**Sister Mary Keefe, OP, at a Mass with two members of St. Bernard Church, is continuing house-to-house visitation in the area.**



*Walking with the people of New Orleans, the Sisters have developed a sense of community ...*

**Today the needs are greater than ever.** Your gift, whatever the level, WILL make an impact on the amount of funding that can be granted to New Orleans and to the other 29 grants and initiatives throughout the country.

Thousands of those in need are affected by grants given this year in 14 states. It is because of people like you that the Ministry Trust is able to reach its goals and support the vision of the Adrian Dominican Sisters to Seek Truth, Make Peace, and Reverence Life.

**Two Adrian Dominican Sisters came to New Orleans long before Katrina. Sister Maureen Fenlon, OP, (left) works with Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*, raising awareness and opposition to the death penalty. Sister Jamie Phelps, OP, (right) is a theologian at Xavier University, the oldest black Catholic university in the United States.**



*Development Office mail is always sent to the Adrian address. This is to inform you that our LOCAL address and phone number have changed to the following:*

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