

Dear Friends,



The months do slip by too fast as one ages, no? I can't remember when I last sent a newsletter out this year (another sign of aging?!) And why am I thinking about the advancing years anyway? Maybe because this is the 50th anniversary of my Religious Profession and it was celebrated well with my Congregation in Columbus in May and with a small celebration here in Honduras. There are 8 of us Golden Jubilarians - all still active and 9 sisters celebrating sixty years of profession! We seem to be aging very well!

Here in Honduras, life goes on and continues to challenge and comfort. Hopefully we do the same in our ministries. The prison system of Honduras has suffered another series of massacres - most were young men trying to leave the gangs. The health system has huge gaps in its infrastructures that delay or cancel needed medicines for HIV persons.

Yet, there are daily reminders that life goes on in spite of it all and goes on well for many who would seem to have reason to give up easily. Our home visits from Casa Aurora show us a world of ordinary people courageously living each day in a joyful manner. A special treat is to go to the monthly Saturday meetings of our adolescents- There are more than 25 of them who come. A psychologist, who volunteers time with us, prepares activities that help the young people to be positive about themselves and to communicate with others, as well as assume responsibility for their adherence to the medicines they will need all their lives.

Love,

Doris

ANYBODY HOME?

Each Wednesday I help out with the home visits that our social promoters make. They do it other mornings but on this day we program visits to those who live at distances very inconvenient for bus travel. Most of our Casa Aurora families live outside the city and travel on two different buses to get to the meetings each week. Generally, we visit the families who cannot come to the weekly gatherings.

This particular Wednesday we drove almost two hours to visit two families. The drive itself through the rural mountain area was refreshing. Olimpia is a grandmother in her 80's who has lived with her seventeen year old grandson Eduardo. Eduardo's parents are dead and he was not discovered to be HIV positive until he was almost thirteen years old. He is quite healthy now with the aid of the

antiretroviral medications and participates in the youth program. He came to the city a few months ago to live with a brother and go to school here as the youngsters in the rural school often made fun of him because he was HIV positive.

Olimpia seems much more delicate than the last time I saw her and has been alone since Eduardo went to the city. She was so glad to see us. Talking to Eduardo a few days later at the youth meeting, he indicated he was returning to be with his grandmother because he knew she was not managing too well on her own. In the youth meeting each adolescent was asked to make a cutout book and put in pictures of family and friends. Later these were shared in the group. Eduardo spoke of his grandmother as his life-saver who was there for him. *(continued on next page)*



HIV adolescents who come together one Saturday of each month at Casa Aurora

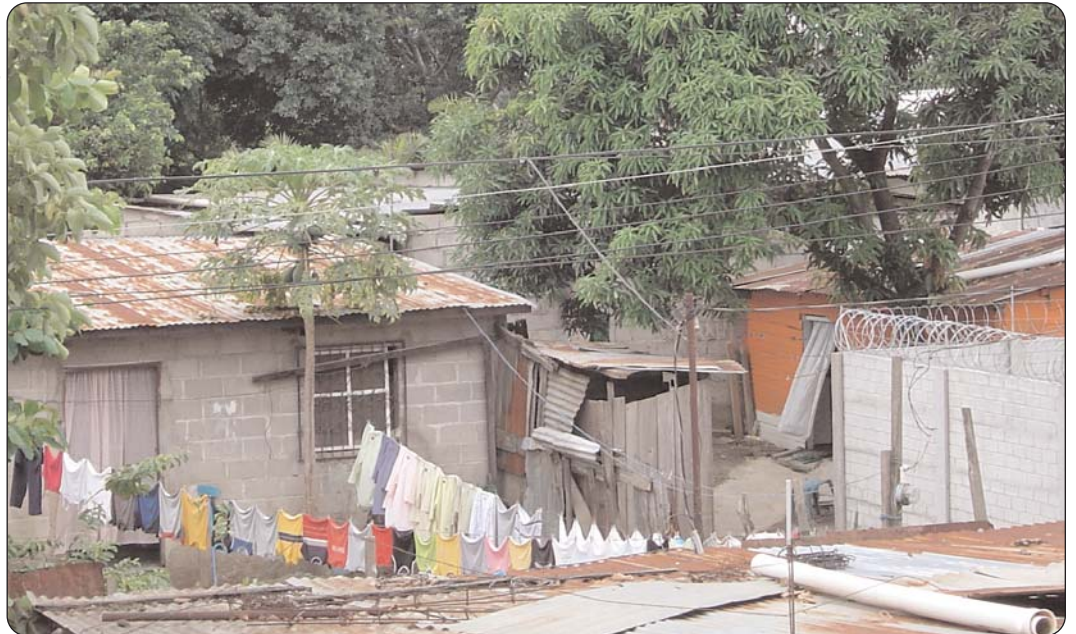
Anybody Home? *(continued from first page)*

How nice to hear a seven-teen year old saying that about an adult!

We then visited Daisy who is in the midst of slowly building a house, as of the moment; it has a roof, no windows, a floor and a kitchen. Three months ago her oldest son 10 drowned when he and some others went swimming in the river nearby. Her youngest child is HIV positive. Daisy had a meal of beans, rice, meat and cow's milk ready for us. The breeze coming through the space where the door will be was a delight as we sat there. She used to live in the city with her husband but they decided to come back to the country and work agricul-

ture. She is still grieving the loss of the child but seems to be more tranquil. We looked at some pictures she had of the three children and the middle child arrived as we leafed through the pictures. He quickly showed us the ones of himself!

For us, the visits are an important way of getting to know the families and seeing the children and their parents in another setting. The families love to receive us and wish we would stay the whole day just to be with them.



A typical house that one would find in a crowded area of the city. There are no zoning laws!

REFLECTION- FIFTY YEARS LATER...



Sr. Doris (left) celebrates her 50th Jubilee with friends from her ministries.

Somehow it does not seem possible that those fifty years have gone by. I can divide the years as almost thirty years in education in USA and then almost twenty years in Bolivia, Peru and Honduras. I celebrated a simple Eucharist here in Honduras to give thanks for God's fidelity these fifty years and I celebrated it with members of the different groups with whom I have ministered here - Casa Aurora, the Dominican friars and laity,

Prison Pastoral Team, folks from the Housing Project and St Martin de Porres School etc.

The past months have been a time for me of reflection on the people who have been with me all along the way- from family to Columbus, to Connecticut, to South America and then to here. Often in mission talks I say that the last twenty years have been the happiest for me. At the same time I can say that my teaching and administration days still are with me and still energize me. I often remind myself of the advice a fourteen year old boy suffering with Aids gave to a group of foreign visitors when asked what he would like to say to the world. "Do what you can, in the time that you have, wherever you are" That says it nicely- I would say the same if asked to say something about these fifty years. God has indeed been a faithful companion whom I meet daily in the faces of the children, in the courage of the adults, in the sharing, in the dancing, in the singing and in all the daily events of my third world experiences.