



CONGREGATION OF NOTRE DAME

Blessed Sacrament Province • Development Office

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Christmas 2009

Dear Friend of CND,

Have you ever wondered how the Christmas gift giving tradition began? Where did this lovely exchange of kindness get its start? It began on that first Christmas, when the Magi traveling from the East knelt before the Christ Child bearing precious gifts. There, in a stable in Bethlehem, these wise men reached out a hand in generosity to a poor child who would go on to change the world, to change history.

When I think of the Christmas story and its meaning in my life and in the lives of our Sisters and the people we serve, I cannot help but think of you, our dear friend. You are very much like the Magi on that first Christmas. You have seen the faces of children and families in need and stand before them with your gifts of prayer, love and generosity.

Every gift you send to us is a precious gift that will help poor children and their families go on to do great things, maybe even change the world. We are so grateful for all you have done and continue to do to further our mission of love.

Perhaps the best way to thank you for your generosity is to show you what we have accomplished through your support of the Monti Ministry Fund, which provides grants to programs that directly serve children and families in need.

At **St. Catherine Academy** in Fairfield, Connecticut, the Monti Fund is helping CND Sisters like Sister Nancy O'Neill bring academic programs and life skills training to children with intellectual disabilities. Your assistance also has allowed us to complete a playground and picnic area that is wheelchair accessible.

At **St. Mary of the Assumption Parish** on Staten Island, Sister Margarita Casteneda, CND is helping to ensure that poor Hispanic families get life's basics – food, medicine, and clothing. A grant from the Monti Fund has allowed us to train students from St. John's University on Staten Island to serve this community in tandem with us.

Project Appalachia in Southwest Virginia supports children by assisting their mothers. Through a grant from the Monti Fund, our CND Associate, Jackie Greenfield, has facilitated the purchase of computers and programs to enable women to earn their GED, improve their literacy skills and prepare for the job market.





At **St. Martin de Porres Academy** in New Haven, Connecticut, low-income at-risk children have a chance to attend this college prep middle school tuition free, giving them an opportunity to break out of the cycle of poverty. The Monti Fund provides an extended day program that offers students the chance to participate in sports, drama, community service, tutoring and other extracurricular activities in a positive environment infused with Christian values. Sister Louise Finn, CND is librarian at the school.

Children's Community School in Waterbury, Connecticut, provides educational services to children from economically, socially and environmentally disadvantaged homes. Sister Eileen Kelly, CND ministered at this school, which helps children in preschool through fifth grade get the extra support they need to succeed academically.

At **Plainfield Catholic School**, where Sister Anne Landry, CND ministered as principal, the Monti Fund directly assisted six families struggling to keep up with tuition payments, including a single mother who is going to school and working to support her children, a family facing a serious illness, and a student given up for adoption.

At Christmas, as you gather with your loved ones to celebrate this beautiful holiday and holy day, remember how many children and families have smiles on their faces and joy in their hearts because of your love and kindness. I am enclosing a prayer card as a thank you for all you do to keep the spirit of Christmas alive each and every day of the year.

Please consider sending a gift to assist the work of the Monti Ministry Fund. With your help we can ensure that more children and families will receive the support they need as they struggle to break free of the cycle of poverty and despair that threatens to keep them trapped in lives of quiet desolation.

God bless you for your generosity and compassion. We will remember you in prayer during this season of light and love.

Gratefully,

Kathleen Murphy, CND

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*P.S. We would like to remember you and your loved ones in prayer at Christmas.
Please write your Special Intentions on the enclosed slip and return it to us.*