

## Winter 2004

### September Jubilee Celebration

Jubilee and Sale held in September, 2004...



Congratulating our faithful employees for their long years of service at the annual Employee Recognition Dinner...



Sr. Judith and Sr. Mary Ellen participating in the T.O.U.C.H. program (Touch Our Unique Catholic Handicapped)...



### Christmas Celebrations 2004

Every Christmas is special in our convent, but this year seemed extra special. From the beautiful poinsettias and Christmas trees donated for our chapel decorations to the many messages and gifts from family, friends, staff, and generous benefactors; from the remembrances in prayer coming to us from far

and wide, to the guests who came to share the holiday with us, the celebration of the Birth of Our Lord filled us with warmth.

*These pictures (9 below) show scenes of our celebration: our beautiful chapel, Sr. Kathleen blessing the Christmas tree, our guests: the Burak and Seaboldt families and of course the Sisters. We especially delighted in the Christmas Eve appearance of that jolly old elf, Santa. Another wonderful experience was the opportunity to experience again the joy of Christmas through the delight of a child, Charisma Burak. May the light of Christ permeate this New Year of grace for all.*





### **Preparations for a Vision of Our Future Together**

As members of the USA Province of the Franciscans of Vöcklabruck (the name of our particular Franciscan congregation,) we are preparing for our Provincial Chapter in September of this year. Next year, the three provinces of this congregation will convene for our General Chapter of Elections and Affairs.

How are we as a province community and as a whole congregation of Sisters preparing for this big event in 2006? We are working on several issues of primary importance in our lives, to better understand them and live them in a meaningful way today, especially in answering the needs of our time. Our main focus is on our particular congregation's charism, our Constitutions and our Ministries.

As far as the USA Province, we are beginning our preparations by taking our cue from the theme Franciscan Federation Conference ongoing task force called "Freeing the Flame." The work of this task force began last year and will continue for the next few years. The four "Flames" to be freed in our lives are: The Flame of the Gospel (we take the flame of the Gospel and ponder what we can do together to "free its fire"), The flame of our Evangelical Identity (Who we are as Third Order and the continuing study of our charism), The Flame of the Global Community (our 'way' in the universal community, our responsibilities and challenges) and The Flame of Ecclesial Relationship (our relationships within the Church and our role of healing broken relationships in the family of God.). Workshops on these themes will be held in various regional locations around the country so that every Franciscan Third Order congregation will be able to have input and a voice in the process.

Taking these ideas we will work to shape a vision of our future. In our consideration we will not lose sight of these essentials:

- Fidelity to our charism and core values as Franciscans of Vöcklabruck
- Integrity as we live our simple way of life
- Remaining committed to ministerial involvement and mission with the poor and those on the margins.

Members of our USA province have a strong faith and trust relationship with God. We put our confidence in the providence of God and believe that we will be led by the Spirit of God to make wise choices. We pray constantly that we will be guided in our discernment of our future.