

**California, USA, April 7, 2006:**  
**CELEBRATING 400 YEARS OF LIFE, LOVE AND SERVICE**

The joy and climate of celebration that Saint Jeanne and her first companions must have experienced 400 years ago has transcended time and geographical boundaries of immense proportions to reach us in the United States these days and months that we have been preparing to launch the year of jubilation that begins today. The spirit that impelled these women to undertake the task that God assigned them, with all that encouraged as well as challenged them, is the same spirit that drives the Company of Mary in these times in which situations are different, but the challenges are no less daunting.

Two commemorative postage stamps, one with the logo of our 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and another one with the picture of Saint Jeanne and the children, have been issued and are being used for the first time today to honor the tradition of excellence in education that has been a gift received and a gift given. The postage stamp symbolizes a significant and enduring purpose in its time-honored function of uniting people through letter-writing. Although communication in cyberspace has replaced the letter in the mail, our commemorative postage stamps memorialize the remarkable role of communication by traditional correspondence in our 400 years of history.

To set the course of the year's celebration, we have made the effort to capture and express in a concrete manner the legacy that we have inherited to continue the work of Saint Jeanne:

To *MAINTAIN THE FLAME*, a Commission of sisters and laity was organized and goals set for specific acts of thanksgiving and renewed commitment in our communities and in our ministries. Saint Jeanne, wife, mother, religious has been presented to our colleagues in ministry and the recipients of our services as one to whom they can look for inspiration and example in their respective vocation (retreats, Sister Leticia Salazar invited as presenter at the annual Religious Education Congress last weekend, integrating into the topic of religious education the project of Saint Jeanne...)

To *EXTEND A HAND*, our students, motivated by the zeal of their teachers, sisters and laity, have conducted a successful campaign for funds that will benefit the life and work of our sisters in Africa. The efforts of the sisters and laity to bring unity and justice to our divided society has not gone unheeded and unrecognized (the educational focus of the Company acknowledged by the Luevano Education Award given to Sister Cecilia Duran on April 5, 2006, for her implementation of that focus in her life and ministry; solidarity with the undocumented in our current struggle these days at the highest level of our government ).

To *FULFILL OUR NAME*, proclaiming our calling as Daughters of Our Lady, the emblem that signifies our belonging to her Company has been unveiled in a prominent place in our ministry at Tustin as a tribute to all that is signified by 400 years of faithful service by our sisters all over the world...sisters past and present with whom we experience close ties of solidarity. The large emblem was the backdrop of the events at the 100<sup>th</sup> celebration by the Province of Mexico North at Culiacan and was given to our Province as a symbol of our unity with all Provinces as anniversaries of various stages are celebrated.